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THE SONGSTRESSES OF SCOTLAND

TWO VOLS.—I.

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# THE SONGSTRESSES OF SCOTLAND

By SARAH TYTLER AND J. L. WATSON

*Henrietta Keddie*

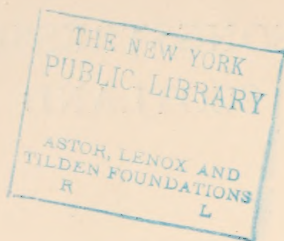
TWO VOLS.—I.



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TO THE  
AUTHOR OF "RAB AND HIS FRIENDS "  
WHO HAS SHOWN TO THE PRESENT GENERATION  
WHAT SCOTCH WIT AND PATHOS CAN BE  
THIS BOOK  
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED  
BY TWO OF HIS FRIENDS AND COUNTRYWOMEN

NEW YORK  
JAN 1914  
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Nov 1907  
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## PREFACE.

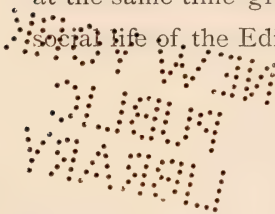
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THE object of the authors of this book has been to bring together into one group some gifted women whose songs are known wherever the Scotch foot treads or the Scotch language lingers. It was the part of famous Frenchwomen to reign in French *salons*; it has remained for this unique group of Scotchwomen to reign alike "in the kitchen and the ha'," in the cottage as well as the castle.

The records of these song-writers already published do not bring them together and show them as representing a delightful branch of art. They are deficient likewise in other important particulars. The present writers therefore thought that an attempt to supply such deficiencies before it was too late would be acceptable to the general public. They have

endeavoured to represent these singers amid their local surroundings, and the contemporaries with whom they were on terms of intimacy, so that side-lights might thus be cast both on the singers and their songs.

In one instance the authors have been fortunate in finding quite fresh material. Through the kind liberality of Miss Douglas, Cumin Place, Grange, Edinburgh, and of other friends, they have had access to a large portion of Alison Cockburn's fine old letters, on which Sir Walter Scott set great store. These letters afford a wonderfully perfect picture of the woman, and at the same time give quaint glimpses into the social life of the Edinburgh of the past.



## GLOSSARY.

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*A-be, let a-be*, let alone.  
*Ae*, one.  
*Agee*, awry, to one side; wrong.  
*Ain*, own.  
*Ait-cake*, oat-cake.  
*Arle*, to confirm a bargain with a piece of money.  
*Auld*, old.  
*Auld Reekie*, Edinburgh.  
*Aumry*, a cupboard.  
*Ayont*, beyond.  
  
*Ba'*, a ball.  
*Bab*, a nosegay.  
*Baillie*, an alderman.  
*Bairn*, a child.  
*Bandster*, one who binds sheaves.  
*Banning*, cursing.  
*Bannock*, a cake made with water only, and baked on a girdle.  
*Bardy*, to argue petulantly.  
*Bauk*, the cross-beam which supports the rafters.  
*Bauld*, bold.  
*Bauldy*, Archibald.  
*Beck*, to curtsey.  
*Beck*, a waterfall.  
*Ben*, to bring ben, to carry within.  
*Bicker*, a wooden bowl.  
*Bield*, shelter.  
*Bien*, comfortable.  
*Biggit*, built.  
*Bigonet*, a linen cap or coif.  
*Bink*, a bench or seat.  
*Blate*, bashful.  
*Blink*, a gleam; a glance.

*Blithe*, cheerful.  
*Blybs*, an eruption on the skin.  
*Bobbing*, dancing.  
*Bodle*, a coin equal to the third part of a halfpenny.  
*Boggie*, a spirit that frequents marshy places.  
*Bogle*, a hobgoblin.  
*Bon-grace*, a straw hat.  
*Bonnie*, beautiful, pretty.  
*Bowsing*, drinking.  
*Bracken*, the fern.  
*Brae*, a declivity.  
*Brag*, the boast.  
*Braid*, broad.  
*Braw*, fine.  
*Braws*, fine clothes.  
*Bridie*, the little bride.  
*Broose*, a race at country weddings.  
*Brose*, a kind of pottage made by pouring boiling water on oatmeal.  
*Brownny*, a sprite or fairy who made himself useful as a household drudge.  
*Browst*, as much malt liquor as is brewed at a time.  
*Buchts*, sheep-pens.  
*Bucken*, buckhorn.  
*Buiket* (booked), having a purpose of marriage registered.  
*Burnie*, a small rivulet.  
*Buskit*, attired.  
*Bygones*, bygones.  
*Byre*, a cow-house.  
  
*Caddie*, a messenger.  
*Cadgie*, cheerful, sportive.

- Cairly*, see Carle.  
*Cairn*, a heap of stones; a rocky mountain.  
*Callant*, a stripling.  
*Caller*, fresh.  
*Cannily*, cautiously, gently.  
*Canny*, cautious, prudent.  
*Cantrips*, foolish tricks.  
*Canty*, small, neat.  
*Carle*, an old man.  
*Carline*, an old woman.  
*Caterans*, Highland robbers.  
*Chap*, to knock.  
*Chapman*, a pedlar.  
*Chaumer*, a chamber.  
*Chiel*, *chield*, a young man.  
*Chuckies*, chickens.  
*Clachan*, a village with a church in it.  
*Clack*, gossip.  
*Clack*, sound of a mill-wheel.  
*Claver*, to talk idly.  
*Claymore*, a large sword for both hands.  
*Cleathing*, clothing.  
*Cleckit*, hatched.  
*Cleugh*, a hollow between precipitous banks.  
*Clocksy*, lively.  
*Cockup*, a hat turned up in front.  
*Coft*, bought.  
*Cog*, a circular wooden vessel.  
*Colley*, a shepherd's dog.  
*Coof*, a silly, feeble fellow.  
*Corn-bing*, a corn-heap.  
*Cosy*, comfortable.  
*Coupet*, overset.  
*Cowed*, put down, frightened.  
*Cowl*, a nightcap.  
*Cowt*, a colt.  
*Crack*, to converse familiarly.  
*Craft* (croft), a small farm.  
*Craigs*, rocks.  
*Crappit-heads*, haddock-heads stuffed with oatmeal, onions, suet, &c.  
*Creel*, a fish-basket.  
*Creelwife*, a fishwife.  
*Crookit*, crooked.  
*Croon*, to emit a murmuring sound.  
*Crouse*, bold, confident.  
*Crunkle*, to crease.  
*Crusie*, a small iron lamp.  
*Cummer*, a female friend or gossip.  
*Daddy*, father.  
*Daffing*, gaiety, pastime.  
*Daft*, foolish.  
*Daidly*, a pinafore.  
*Darg*, a day's work.  
*Daunder*, to saunter.  
*Daur*, dare.  
*Daurna*, dare not.  
*Dawin'*, dawn.  
*Dawty*, darling.  
*Deil-hair't* (devil a hair of it), nothing.  
*Dement*, to put mad.  
*Din*, noise.  
*Dirgie*, a funeral.  
*Disna*, does not.  
*Doddy*, without horns.  
*Doited*, stupid.  
*Dominie*, a teacher.  
*Dool*, *dule*, sorrow, woe, alas!  
*Dorty*, pettish, saucy.  
*Douce*, sedate.  
*Dow*, do, seeks to do.  
*Dowfness*, melancholy.  
*Dowie*, dull, spiritless.  
*Dozened*, benumbed.  
*Draff*, brewery grains.  
*Dree*, to endure.  
*Dribbles*, drops.  
*Drumly*, muddy.  
*Duihnewassel*, the member of a Highland clan next in rank to the chief.  
*Dumfoundered*, stupefied.  
*Dung*, knocked over.  
*Dwam*, a swoon.  
*Eerie*, dreary, causing fear.  
*Eident*, industrious.  
*Elderlin*, elderly.  
*Elritch*, frightful.  
*Fain*, eager, glad.  
*Farin'*, fare.  
*Fash*, trouble.



- Fashious*, troublesome.  
*Fauld*, a fold.  
*Fause*, false.  
*Fecht*, fight.  
*Fee*, to hire.  
*Fend*, to provide for.  
*Fendin'*, faring.  
*Fertie*, a wonder.  
*Fidge*, to be restless or fidgety.  
*Fleech*, to flatter.  
*Fling*, to dance.  
*Flit*, to remove from one house to another.  
*Flyte*, to scold.  
*Force*, a waterfall.  
*Forgather*, to meet with, to court as sweethearts.  
*Fou* (full), drunk.  
*Fule*, a fool.  
*Furm*, a form or bench.  
  
*Gab*, to talk.  
*Gabbert*, a boat.  
*Gait*, way.  
*Gang*, go.  
*Gangrel*, a stroller.  
*Gar*, to compel.  
*Gauciness*, stateliness of person.  
*Gear*, money, goods, clothing.  
*Gee*, to change.  
*Genty*, neat, genteel.  
*Ghaist*, a ghost.  
*Gie*, to give.  
*Giff-gaff*, mutual giving.  
*Gill*, a ravine.  
*Gilly*, a giddy young woman.  
*Gin*, if.  
*Glaikit*, giddy.  
*Glaumerie*, ocular deception caused supernaturally.  
*Glee*, to squirt.  
*Glen*, a valley.  
*Glent*, *glint*, to glance.  
*Gloaming*, the evening twilight.  
*Gloom*, to look sullen.  
*Glower*, to stare.  
*Gowan*, the mountain daisy.  
*Gowd*, gold.  
*Gowk*, a fool.  
*Gowl*, to weep noisily.  
*Graith*, directness.  
  
*Grane*, to groan.  
*Grannie*, grandmother.  
*Grat*, wept.  
*Gree*, the pre-eminence.  
*Greet*, to weep.  
*Gridle* (girdle), a circular iron plate for toasting cakes on the fire.  
*Grip*, to grasp.  
*Grit* (great), ready to cry.  
*Grue*, to shudder.  
  
*Haggis-bag*, a sheep's maw.  
*Hairst*, harvest.  
*Hale*, whole.  
*Halesome*, healthsome.  
*Halfling*, a stripling.  
*Halflings*, half-way.  
*Hallan*, an inner wall in cottages to protect the room from the cold air of the door.  
*Harry*, to pillage.  
*Haud*, to hold.  
*Haudin'* (holding), a farm.  
*Haver*, to talk foolishly.  
*Haverel*, a stupid person.  
*Havins*, manners.  
*Heartsome*, merry.  
*Hecht*, gave.  
*Hempie*, a tricky youth.  
*Het*, hot.  
*His lane*, alone.  
*Hooly and fairly*, cautiously.  
*Hope*, a hollow.  
*Hout ! hoot !* (fy), expressive of dissatisfaction.  
  
*Ilk*, the same (*of that ilk*, i.e., of the same).  
*Ilka*, *ilk*, every.  
*Ill-faured*, ill-favoured.  
*Infare*, a feast given the day after a wedding.  
*Ingle*, fire.  
*Ingle-neuk*, the corner of the fireside.  
  
*Jaud*, a young woman.  
*Jo*, a sweetheart.  
  
*Kailyard*, a kitchen-vegetable garden.

- Kale, kail*, colewort; broth made from the same.  
*Kebbuck*, a cheese.  
*Ken*, to know.  
*Kentna*, knew not.  
*Kimmer*, see Cumber.  
*Kirn*, a churn.  
*Kirn*, a harvest-home.  
*Knowe*, a little hill.  
*Kye*, cows.  
  
*Lad-bairn*, a male child.  
*Lag*, slow, tardy.  
*Laigh*, low.  
*Laird*, a proprietor of land.  
*Landward*, rustic, boorish.  
*Langsyne*, long ago.  
*Lass-bairn*, a female child.  
*Lave*, to wash.  
*Lave*, the remainder.  
*Laverock*, the lark.  
*Lawerly*, lawyerlike.  
*Lea*, pasture-land.  
*Leal*, loyal.  
*Lear, lere, lair, lare*, learning.  
*Leddy*, a lady.  
*Lee*, to lie.  
*Leglin*, a milk-pail.  
*Letna*, let not.  
*Lick*, to beat.  
*Lift*, to carry off by theft.  
*Lilt*, to sing.  
*Lin*, a waterfall.  
*Ling*, rushy grass.  
*Link*, to walk smartly or trippingly.  
*Linkum-twine*, packthread.  
*Lish*, active.  
*Loaning*, a road between fields.  
*Loof*, the palm of the hand.  
*Loon*, a boy.  
*Loudons*, the Lothians.  
*Loundert*, stunned.  
*Loup*, to leap.  
*Low*, a blaze.  
*Lucken-gowan*, the globe-flower.  
*Lug*, the ear.  
*Lunzie folk*, vagrant people.  
*Lyart*, grey-haired.  
*Lyke-wake*, the watching of a dead body.  
  
*Mair, mairly*, more.  
*Maist*, most.  
*Mane*, to moan.  
*Manse*, a parsonage-house.  
*Mark, merk*, a Scotch silver coin, about thirteepence-halfpenny sterling.  
*Maun*, must.  
*Mawkin*, a hare.  
*May*, a young maiden.  
*Mear*, a mare.  
*Merry-meet*, a feast on the occasion of the birth of a child.  
*Merse, The*, Berwickshire.  
*Mess (or Mass) John*, the parish priest.  
*Mill-e'e*, the opening in the cases of a mill where the meal is let out.  
*Mischanter*, a misfortune.  
*Mittens*, worsted gloves.  
*Mools*, the earth of the grave.  
*Moss-trooper*, a robber.  
*Mou*, the mouth.  
*Muckle*, much, big.  
*Mutch*, a woman's head-dress.  
*Mysie*, Marjory.  
  
*Neep*, turnip.  
*Nettle-kail*, soup made with nettles.  
*Neuk (nook)*, corner.  
*Nieve*, the fist.  
*Noddle*, the head.  
*Nouse (vouc)*, sense, understanding.  
  
*O'erlay (overlay)*, a cravat.  
*Out, to gae out*, to rise in rebellion.  
*Ower*, over.  
  
*Pack*, to go away.  
*Pad*, to travel on foot.  
*Paidle*, to wade in water.  
*Pat*, a pot.  
*Pawkinsness*, slyness.  
*Pearlins*, laces.  
*Pensy*, conceited.  
*Pibroch*, the music of the bagpipes.

- Pickle*, a small quantity.  
*Plack*, a coin equal to about one-third of a penny.  
*Plaiden*, coarse twilled woollen cloth.  
*Play-banning*, play-denouncing.  
*Plenishing*, furnishings.  
*Plowter*, to flounder through water or mud.  
*Pock*, a bag.  
*Portioner*, the possessor of part of a property which has been originally divided among co-heirs.  
*Pouch*, a purse.  
*Pouther*, powder.  
*Pow*, the head.  
*Pund*, a pound.  
  
*Quo'* (quoth), said.  
  
*Randy*, *ran'y*, a rough, scolding woman.  
*Rantin'*, cheerful, gleesome.  
*Rap*, to knock.  
*Rax*, to reach.  
*Red*, to put in order.  
*Reekin'*, smoking.  
*Reeling*, dancing reels.  
*Reiving*, plundering.  
*Rising*, a rebellion.  
*Roose*, to extol.  
*Routh*, plenty.  
*Rowan-tree*, the mountain-ash.  
*Rowing*, rolling.  
*Rug and rive*, to carry off by violence.  
*Rummelgumption*, common-sense.  
*Rung*, a heavy staff, a cudgel.  
*Runkled*, wrinkled.  
  
*Sair*, sore.  
*Sark*, shirt.  
*Saut*, salt.  
*Scauld*, to scold.  
*Scone*, a cake.  
*Scour*, to run about.  
*Settle*, a seat.  
*Shaws*, birchen woods.  
*Shear*, to cut corn.  
  
*Shirra*, the sheriff.  
*Shouther*, the shoulder.  
*Sib*, related by blood.  
*Sic*, *siccan*, such.  
*Sillar*, silver.  
*Singet heads*, singed sheep's heads.  
*Sinsyne*, since.  
*Skeich*, skittish.  
*Skirl*, to shout shrilly.  
*Slee*, sly.  
*Smooth-gabbit*, smooth-spoken.  
*Snood*, a fillet for binding the hair.  
*Sonsy*, well-conditioned.  
*Sough*, a rushing sound.  
*Spaewife*, a fortune-teller.  
*Speer*, *spier*, to ask.  
*Spence*, the interior apartment of a country-house.  
*Spring*, a quick dance tune.  
*Spunk*, spark.  
*Spunkie*, an ignis fatuus.  
*Stark*, strong.  
*Steeks*, shuts.  
*Stickit*, was unable to proceed with.  
*Stirk*, a young ox or heifer.  
*Stour*, stern.  
*Stown*, stolen.  
*Straik*, to stretch.  
*Straikit*, stroked.  
*Strath*, a valley through which a river flows.  
*Strippit*, striped.  
*Swankie*, a clever young fellow.  
*Swatch*, a pattern, an imitation.  
*Swerf*, to swoon.  
*Syne*, then.  
  
*Tap*, top.  
*Tautit*, rough and shaggy.  
*Tent*, to take care of.  
*Tether*, a rope with which cattle are tied at pasture.  
*Thrang* (throng), busy.  
*Thraw*, twist.  
*Thrawn-gabbit* (*lit.*, having a distorted mouth), ill-tempered.  
*Thrawnness*, obstinacy.  
*Thritty*, thirty.



## LADY GRISELL BAILLIE.

1665—1746.

THE bravest of all Scotch heroines is Lady Grisell Baillie; and the simplest and sweetest of stories is her memoir, written by her elder daughter, Lady Murray of Stanhope, the friend of Molly Lepel, Lady Hervey.

Lady Grisell was born on Christmas Day, 1665, at Redbraes Castle, in the Merse, which is famous in old Scotch tradition for the beauty of its women and the gallantry of its men. As a rule, the Merse shares with the “fat Lothians” a certain tameness of landscape, but there are exceptions on both sides—the long grey ridges of the Lammermoors, and the broken crests of the Cheviots. Grisell was the eldest of the eighteen children of Sir Patrick Home, afterwards Earl of Marchmont. She had an ailing

mother, and a father absorbed in the heat of desperate political troubles.

The cares of life came betimes to the sensible, active girl, who, like a little old woman, in her tippet and mob-cap, ran about in the drugget-hung rooms and among the wand chairs, the aumries, and the spinning-wheels. She learned the trick of serving her kindred so early and so well, that she could not give it up when she was a fine old lady. Till her eighty-first year, she rose the earliest of her family, and managed the most difficult of their affairs.

When barely beyond childhood she was chosen to go on an innocent political message to an unfortunate gentleman lying in prison. Most likely she rode behind a trusty servant on one of her father's horses. She must have entered Edinburgh by one of its bristling ports, and "grued" at the skulls whitening on its pikes, before she passed the many steep gables and outside stairs, the yawning close mouths and towering houses, and stared with round eyes of wonder at the Nor' Loch and the Castle, at the grand mansions with their bonnie gardens, and



the throng of passengers between the Canon-gate and the High Street.

The gentleman whom Grisell went to visit was Mr. George Baillie of Jerviswoode, in whom she was fated to have a nearer interest than that arising from her father's complicity in his offence. Her mission was executed with such discretion that she was called upon to undertake another before Mr. Baillie suffered for treason. In the course of these resorts to the grim quarters of the Tolbooth, she met and became acquainted with young George Baillie. At the time of his father's execution he was only a lad of nineteen, and she a lass of eighteen. Every night at this period she walked alone over a dark country road and through an eerie kirk-yard to carry food to her father, who was in hiding in the family vault at Polwarth. Sir Patrick lay on his mattress among the mouldering bones of his fathers, with his good Kilmarnock cowl drawn well over his brow defying the cold, as he whiled away the time profitably in repeating George Buchanan's Latin psalms. Along with household news and irrepressible quavers of girlish laughter, his

young daughter brought him his rations; and among them, on one occasion, was the famous sheep's head, the disappearance of which from the family dinner-table had nearly betrayed them both to the troopers who were in possession at Redbraes.

Even after Sir Patrick's escape beyond the seas, and after the most of his family had joined him, Grisell had a heavy end of the string to bear. She undertook and accomplished, all by herself, two voyages from Holland to Scotland and back again, in order to bring over her sister Julian to join the rest of the family. When the girls had made the passage and landed at Brill, they set out, the same night, to walk to Rotterdam, under the escort of a gentleman. To be sure, the feat proved too much for one of the girls, and, to be sure also, Julian lost her shoes in the mud, and Grisell had to take her on her back and carry her the rest of the way, the gentleman being loaded with the luggage.

Grisell's family settled at Utrecht, where they lived till the Revolution—an interval of three years and a half. To these three years and a

half of exile, poverty, and toil, Grisell was wont to refer as having been the happiest years of her life. Work was nothing to her at that time, when life and love were young. She did the greater part of the household work for the large struggling family. Grisell seemed to have taken kindly to the land of canals, mighty poplars, and iris-painted houses, with whose natives, in their thrift, industry, love of learning, and zeal for religious freedom, the Scotch have so many points of union, besides those confirmed by the Synod of Dort.

The tightly-pinched household of Dr. Wallace, as Sir Patrick called himself, was the hospitable point of union for poor Scotch ladies and gentlemen, far and near. So little was this Presbyterian household disfigured by the asceticism which was an ugly excrescence of later Presbyterianism, as of later Puritanism, that the head of the house, in writing home before Lady Home and the family joined him, expressly desires, with a father's heart for his children, that "care may be taken to keep them hearty and merry, laughing, dancing, and singing." If he were among

them he would help their mirth by a tune on the flute, which he was learning. And again, he urges that "they ought not with right to pass a week-day without dancing; for lost estates can be recovered again, but health once lost by a habit of melancholy can never be recovered." These Homes and their guests drank small beer instead of Bourdeaux, ate porridge and milk in place of curious pasties, and wore threadbare plaidens and faded linen for brocade and velvet. They had no money to spend on such Dutch porcelain mugs, cups, and pots with flower roots in them, as other banished English and Scotch ladies improved their banishment by collecting. The Home's whole company, on one occasion, could only furnish a single coin to street beggars; but this was little matter to the family whom the burly clothworkers and the lean scholars of Utrecht alike respected and loved.

Sir Patrick taught Dutch, English, &c., to his young people, and to Grisell among the rest, when she could spare time for a lesson. Her younger sister Christina was the great singer of the family; but Grisell, in the midst of her

multifarious engagements, left a MS. volume of written and half-written songs of which she was the author.

In addition to other members of the household and to visitors, there were two likely young men going and coming to lighten the work to the girls—Grisell's favourite brother, Patrick, and his comrade, George Baillie of Jerviswoode. The young men rode in the Prince of Orange's Guards, stood sentry at his gate, had the treat of seeing him eat his dinner in public, and, when they were in mind for a frolic, set their halberts across the door and would not let a pretty girl pass till she gave them a kiss. Grisell had their honour so much at heart that she would sit up of nights, losing the sleep of which she had much need,—and it is written of her that she was always a good sleeper,—that she might wash, starch, and darn her brother's lace cravat and ruffles. Doubtless she did not withhold the same kind, womanly office from her brother's gallant friend, who was living from hand to mouth on what was left of the rents of his confiscated estates, and on money lent to him by

his compassionate Dutch hosts. When Grisell went a-marketing, or to the mill for the family allowance of flour, George Baillie was trusted to attend her if her brothers chanced to be out of the way. The love between them was an understood thing; only he did not have two pennies to rub upon each other. As for her, she had no means of proving how truly she returned his tender affection, except by steadily refusing the flattering offers of marriage which her anxious father and mother were tempted to press upon her, and by vowing, in her youthful enthusiasm, to live and die a maid for his sake.

At that time, according to her daughter's description, Grisell Home, under her high crowned hat and hood, was a very handsome girl, with a light, lithe figure, delicate features, chesnut hair, and a complexion that rivalled the most dazzling red and white of the Dutch women.

There is another account of Grisell, given by an old servant, who remembered her as "a little woman marked by small-pox;" but



whether young or old, blooming or withered, she was one and the same unapproachable Grisell.

At last the Prince of Orange was called to England, and the redemption of his friends drew near. But the epoch of consolation and triumph so long looked forward to, was heavily dashed with disappointment and sorrow to the Homes. The fleet in which the prince and his friends had embarked was reported to have been lost in the storm that had arisen. The family, in the greatest distress, travelled to Helvoetsluys to get reliable tidings. They found a throng before them on the same errand, but though they soon received word of their friends' safety, the news was "no more to Grisell than an occurrence in which she had not the least concern," for that very day her sister Christina died of sore-throat, through the exposure and overcrowding in the small seaport. Grisell's indefatigable spirit was always terribly baffled by death.

After declining to be made one of the maids of honour to Queen Mary, Grisell Home was married to George Baillie at Redbraes Castle, on the 17th September, 1692 — four years sub-

sequent to the revolution which restored to him his estate—when he was in his twenty-ninth and she in her twenty-eighth year. The union, for which there had been so good a preparation, lasted for forty-eight years—years of love and trust. In that long period (according to Grisell's own declaration) there never was the shadow of a quarrel between husband and wife. Grisell's daughter by a single touch preserves the wife's faithful worship and fondness. "He never went abroad but she went to the window to look after him (so she did that very day he fell ill—the last time he was abroad), never taking her eyes from him so long as he was in sight." There are other little touches almost equal to this, telling of the husband and father's devotion. He never came back from London, where he sat in Parliament, without bringing to each of his family something which he thought they would like. "He would have his trunk opened to give us them before he took time to rest himself." When he took his wife and daughters to London with him, and the girls were of an age to relish diversions—"such as balls, masquerades, parties

by water, and music"—the father and the mother were always in the parties, and the busy much-occupied statesman was the merriest of all.

It would seem as if Grisell's great activity and management, with her little trick of spending herself in order to spare others, proved occasionally a trial to her family. Lady Murray recounts one instance of it with the most *naïf* humour. Lady Grisell, when on a visit to her aged father, had undertaken to examine his steward's accounts—a duty for which she was qualified by her husband's having entrusted to her the laying out of his income. She did this work at Kimmerghame for two months, toiling from five in the morning till twelve at night. "She half killed the whole family by attending her, though they kept not the hours that she did." Yet the wife and mother was so modest and so generous in her excess of virtue that her family might well excuse such excess in her.

One must sympathise with the narrative of Grisell and her husband going abroad, in middle life, with their family, to seek health for

their second son-in-law, Lord Binning. Grisell's pleasure in showing her children every corner of Utrecht is very characteristic. It touches one still to read that when—for fear of her dirtying it—she was denied admittance to the house where Sir Patrick Home and his ten children had found quarters, and where young George Baillie had come a-courting, she offered to put off her shoes if she would only be allowed to cross once again the familiar threshold. This was denied her, and she went away in great disappointment.

Perhaps the strongest tribute of affection that is offered to Grisell is that paid to her by her dying son-in-law. Missing her from his sick-bed,—when she was sick herself,—he vehemently protested, “If anything ails mamma I'll put my head under the clothes, and never look up again.” In her agony of grief at his death, Grisell protested “that she could have begged her bread with pleasure to save his life.”

But the end here below of all this true love came at last. George Baillie died on the 6th August, 1738, at Oxford, where he was residing

for the education of Lord Binning's sons. For a long time after Lady Grisell had returned to the Merse, she could do nothing save read his letters, shed floods of tears, and cry how could she live after such a man!

Eight years later, just at the close of the national distress which accompanied the year of the Rebellion, Grisell Baillie, lying ill in London, gave directions that her body should be conveyed to Mellerstain, and laid beside that of her husband in the family vault. But if the carrying out of this wish should be too much trouble, she left her children to do as they pleased. There was a black purse in her cabinet with money which she had kept for that last service, so that the family might not then be straitened.

She had taken much to heart some difference which had arisen between her and her nephews, and spoke strongly of their undutiful and unkind behaviour towards her. But when her daughter censured them, the old woman recalled her censure, and urged that they were the sons of her dear brother, Patrick.

She requested the last chapter of Proverbs to be read, with a view to her grandsons' choice of wives. Then she said that she could die in peace, that all she desired was to be with George Baillie—and so she died.

Of Grisell Baillie's well-known song, "Werena my heart licht I wad dee," Allan Cunningham says, that it is "very original, very characteristic, and very irregular." In its noble homeliness, it is in some respects a reflection of Grisell's life; a specimen of those quickly-scribbled, half-finished songs, to which Lady Murray refers—the song of an idle moment. It is written to give vent to the writer's feelings, and to create a little lively amusement in the family circle. It bears no mark of having been rewritten. Its phrases certainly show no sign of having been fastidiously culled. Comparing it with Lady Grisell's history, it seems to have slight personal references which might give it additional value in the eyes of its author and her friends.

The first verse has something of the old ballad quaintness :—



“There was ance a may and she loo’d na men :  
She biggit her bonnie bower down i’ yon glen ;  
But now she cries Dool ! and Well-a-day !  
Come down the green gate, and come here away.”

Was the “may who loo’d na men” Grisell herself, as she walked “in maiden meditation fancy free,” when her devotion to her family and the labour which it involved prevented her from precociously anticipating her fate, and hankering lackadaisically after love and love’s bane ?

The further incidents told in the song have, indeed, little correspondence with the facts of Grisell’s life, unless indeed that she may have learned, in those years of waiting at Utrecht, to have a special sympathy with that form of love’s malady which is “the sickness of hope deferred.”

Throughout the song, in spite of its hasty carelessness, there are abundant sparkles of picturesqueness and humour. Very expressive is the statement—

“His wee wilfu’ tittie she loo’d na me.”

And its boldness is increased by the explanatory note :—

“(I was taller and twice as bonnie as she).”

Scornfully sad is the record of the mother's feigned illness, which was successful in extorting a hostile pledge from the weak, impetuous son:—

“The day it was set for the bridal to be,  
The wife took a dwam and lay down to dee;  
She mained and she graned wi' fause dolour and pain,  
Till he vow'd he never wad see me again.”

Matter of fact in the extreme, but not without genius in its realism, is the reflection—

“His kindred socht ane o' higher degree,  
Said, Would he wed ane was landless like me?  
Although I was bonnie, I wasna for Johnnie.”

Could such a hero's name have been other than Johnnie?

Comical indeed is the summing-up of the poor heroine's disqualifications as quoted by herself:—

“They said I had neither coo nor cawf,  
Nor *dribbles* o' drink coming through the draff,  
Nor *pickles* o' meal rinnin' frae the mill-e'e.”

The breaking-up of the main thread of the song, that the singer may detail a cruel wrong done her by the spiteful sister, in league with her mortal enemy, the mother, is exceedingly natural:—



“ His tittie she was baith wylie and slee,  
She spied me as I cam ower the lea ;  
And then she ran in, and made a loud din ;  
Believe your ain een an ye trow na me.”

What ! to grudge the lass that one meeting and parting on the lea !—to suspect that she would abuse it to seduce the faltering lover from his duty, and so deny her the “ae kiss” granted even to the hapless wife of auld Robin Gray !

The two verses which describe the despair of the bated bridegroom do not fail in truth and pathos. Even the changed set of the bonnet is remarked upon with womanly fineness of observation :—

“ His bonnet stood aye fu’ round on his brow ;  
His auld ane look’d better than mony ane’s new ;  
But now he lets’t wear ony gait it will hing,  
And casts himsel’ dowie upon the corn-bing.”

Above all, in the two lines of the next verse, this fineness of observation displays itself :—

“ And now he gaes daundrin’ about the dykes ”—

This is a deliberately uninteresting limning of an uninteresting locality sought only for its seclusion.

“ And a’ he dow do is to hound the tykes ”—

is a fitting occupation for a soured and exasperated man, and with a spice of vindictiveness in it.

The last verse has a good deal of the antique ring of the first, and there is some charm in it too, which corresponds with the refrain :—

“ Oh ! were we young now as we ance hae been,  
We should hae been gallopin’ down on yon green,  
And linkin’ it ower the lily-white lea ;  
*And werena my heart licht I wad dee.*”

The song owes its vitality to this recurring burden. Its sudden inspiration has fused and cast into one perfect line the protest of thousands of stricken hearts in every generation. There is a subdued note of deep passion in the half-defiant repetition of the poor heart’s failing refuge : it is the complement of that heroism which broke through and lit up with its glory each crisis of Grisell Baillie’s life of usefulness and trial.

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#### WERENA MY HEART LIGHT.

THERE was ance a may and she loo’d na men :  
She biggit her bonnie bower down i’ yon glen ;

But now she cries Dool ! and Well-a-day !  
Come down the green gate, and come here away.  
But now she cries, &c.

When bonnie young Johnnie cam' ower the sea,  
He said he saw naething sae lovely as me ;  
He hecht me baith rings and monie braw things,  
And werena my heart licht I wad dee.  
He hecht me, &c.

His wee wilfu' tittie she loo'd na me,  
(I was taller and twice as bonnie as she ;)  
She raised sic a pother 'twixt him and his mother,  
That werena my heart licht I wad dee.  
She raised, &c.

The day it was set for the bridal to be,  
The wife took a dwam and lay down to dee ;  
She mained and she graned wi' fause dolour and pain,  
Till he vow'd he never wad see me again.  
She mained, &c.

His kindred socht ane o' higher degree,  
Said, Would he wed ane was landless like me ?  
Although I was bonnie, I wasna for Johnnie,  
And werena my heart licht I wad dee.  
Although I was bonnie, &c.

They said I had neither coo nor cawf,  
Nor dribbles o' drink coming through the draff,

Nor pickles o' meal rinnin' frae the mill-e'e ;  
And werena my heart licht I wad dee.

Nor pickles, &c.

His tittie she was baith wylie and slee,  
She spied me as I cam ower the lea ;  
And then she ran in, and made a loud din ;  
Believe your ain een an ye trow na me.

And then she ran in, &c.

His bonnet stood aye fu' round on his brow ;  
His auld ane look'd better than mony ane's new ;  
But now he lets 't wear ony gait it will hing,  
And casts himsel' dowie upon the corn-bing.

But now he, &c.

And now he gaes daundrin' about the dykes,  
And a' he dow do is to hound the tykes :  
The live-lang nicht he ne'er steeks his e'e ;  
And werena my heart licht I wad dee.

The live-lang nicht, &c.

Oh ! were we young now as we ance hae been,  
We should hae been gallopin' down on yon green,  
And linkin' it ower the lily-white lea ;  
And werena my heart licht I wad dee.

And linkin' it, &c.

## JEAN ADAM.

1710—1765.

MORE than a century and a half ago, long before James Watt was born to give new life to the district, Greenock consisted of two little seaports, a quarter of a mile asunder, and with a wide bay between. The inhabitants of the one were mariners and mechanics, and of the other mariners and foreign traders; and the combined population did not number a thousand.

Both seaports had fair harbours for the period, and both enjoyed the privilege of holding yearly markets. These were frequented by the Highlanders, who, descending in companies from the neighbouring mountains—with peaceful intentions for once—disposed of their native stock, and laid in stores of what were by comparison

foreign commodities. But in each of the towns the great centres of activity were the quays, where the gabberts and the fishing-boats lay-to, and now and then a larger vessel lay off. The best houses were built round the quay-heads, in the old fashion which enabled men and women to look down upon the stir produced by their trades, and to combine the indulgence (in a way no longer possible) with air and light, and even with the view of blossoming gardens, waving woods, and green fields. And Greenock and Crawfurdsdyke alike commanded the grand silver sweep of the Frith of Clyde with its lochs, thrown up against the dark mountain land of Cowal—which included Finnart More and Argyle's Bowling-green.

In the house of one of the shipmasters of Crawfurdsdyke, Jean Adam was born about the year 1710. The education which she received in the parish and sewing schools must have been good; and it was very soon put to use. Her father dying when she was young, Jean entered, while yet a girl, the service of a clergyman in the neighbourhood—Mr. Turner of

Greenock, it has been suggested. Here she united in her own person the offices of a modern *bonne*, a nursery governess, and a sewing maid. A minister's income could not afford great remuneration for such assistance. Even highly-trained sempstresses of the time were in the habit of giving their skill and industry, together with the use of their fashionable patterns, for "sixpence a day and their meat." But if young Jean Adam got small payment in crown pieces, and fared on pease brose, nettle kail, and barley-meal scones, she had some compensation in being made so far one of the minister's family, and in being allowed some small share of the priceless treasure of leisure to cultivate her faculties. Not only had she free access to the stray folio of romances and rhymes which is said to have stirred her up to the exercise of her gift, but also to Milton's poems, and to the stately, artificial English versions of the classics on the bookshelves in the minister's study. A taste for reading in such circumstances must have been comparatively rare, and there is evidence that



Jean was greatly encouraged and applauded in its gratification.

Thus in the west country manse young Jean Adam found a home. Busy she must have been,—now knitting the minister's stockings, again helping to make the clothes of his wife and children, boys and girls alike, now taking her turn at one of the many spinning-wheels, which in their combined droning were fit to drive the worthy minister distraught over his sermons,—and again nursing the little ones and attending on the sick. But it was while so engaged that she drew near and curtsied to the muse. For other experiences of life and livelier diversion than what was afforded by the minister's dusty, heavy volumes, she would have the news of the parish and port. She could tell which lad and lass were forgathering and on the eve of being "cried in the kirk" (*Anglicé*, having the banns published), which boat was amissing, and what bare-footed and shock-headed caterans had crossed at the Cloch ferry for no good. She must also have attended many entertainments both mirthful and solemn—penny wed-



dings and *dirgies*, rockings and tent preachings.

Doubtless, too, on occasion she would go to the fair of Inchcolm—the great Highland fair at Largs—where, besides getting a glimpse of the “horrid heights” of Goatfell and the rocky wilderness of Ailsa Craig, screaming with its wild fowl, she would see more stirks and wethers, and hear more Gaelic, than in any other assembly on this side the Clyde. And if she got a cast in a wherry as far as Glasgow, she would land at the little rustic quay of the Broomielaw, not so big or so busy then as either of those at Crawfurdsdyke or Greenock. Next, she would cross the old bridge, below the arches of which the Highland boats, with their familiar red sails, and their patriarchal freight of cattle, sheep, butter, cheese, eggs, and bright-dyed yarn, passed up the river as far as Rutherglen. Besides the Cross, the College, the High Kirk, the Laigh Kirk, and the new Ramshorn Steeple, she would be certain to visit the imposing metal statue of King William, presented to the city a short while before by Governor Macrae, of

Madras, whose brother was the Ayrshire fiddler in utmost request at kirns. She would get a glimpse of the grand town houses, with their rows of trees and their gardens, and of the high walls and palisades of the mansions of Blythwood and Shawfield, shut off from the streets like the old family hotels of Paris. She would stare awestruck at the Virginian merchants (themselves the noblest, most magnificent men she could ever have beheld), cadets of the county gentry—of the Walkinshaws, Porterfields, Glassfields, and Buchanans. These merchants wore velvet breeches, scarlet cloaks braided with gold or silver, and cocked hats above their wigs. They promenaded, as if with the kind intention of making a public show, before the Exchange, and on that side of the Trongate which at certain hours of the day was respectfully set apart for their private use. Then if Jean had any hankering after the full stream of ruder life, she had liberty to make her way through the narrow lanes and the hurrying throngs of the Salt-market, the Gallowgate, and the Candleriggs.

No portrait of Jean as she was at this date or at a later time is preserved; nor has any tradition handed down her bodily likeness. Her friends of later generations have to fall back on their fancies, and from analogy puzzle out her physical traits. Was she not a raw-boned, irregular-featured, ruddy lass, somewhat uncouth in air and gait, and at once half bashful and half bouncing in manner? Was not her bearing full of simplicity and straightforwardness, while the fire of enthusiasm dwelt in the large grey eyes under the bushy brows, and a world of warm womanly sympathy and loving kindness spoke in the full soft mouth? As to dress: for a gala trip to Glasgow, and a night or two under the hospitable roof of her own or the Turners' kindred, she was certain to wear a well-preserved Indian cotton gown, and a *bon grace* (straw hat). But when down at the manse of Crawforddyke, she would boast nothing better than a woollen petticoat and a short gown of striped linen within the house; and for a tramp across the moor, blackberry-gathering with the bairns, or a turn on the

quay, she had only to throw over her head the tartan screen or plaid, a fashion which kept its hold in this district long after it had been given up in others. Such was the becoming everyday attire of the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire women.

The great glory of Jean's life, attained whilst she was yet a young woman, was the publication of her volume of poems by subscription. The first piece she is said to have written was nothing more formidable than "An Address to Grief," which, however, was much admired by her friends. She continued to write, her poems getting scattered about. They were collected by a Mr. Drummond of Dymnack, and printed in a little volume by James Duncan, in the Salt-market, Glasgow, in 1734. The curious Address to the Reader, which opens the volume, was not written by Jean, but by one of the Crawfurds, her patrons. It gives a short account of the author, and expressly refers to the literary advantages which she had enjoyed during her service in the manse.

Whether the book was published before or after she had quitted this household, which in

course of time must have had no further need of her, is uncertain. Be this as it may, the list of subscribers shows no lack of friends in her native place. The names of Crawfurds are there by scores, from Dame Margaret of Castlemilk, to the relict of Mr. Thomas Crawford, advocate. There are baronets and lairds of that ilk, and their ladies; noble Temples and Montgomerys; ministers of the Gospel and students of divinity in abundance; masters of grammar schools, condescending generously to encourage a sister rival; and merchants and tradesmen down to hammermen and portioners.

If Jean's literary venture did not prove a great success in a mercantile light, it was at least well received by her contemporaries. And one advantage, quite apart from its pecuniary success, it certainly won for her, and that was the distinction, by no means slight in those primitive days, of being in most circles welcomed as a poetess. Yet this distinction was not always held as an honour by the traders of the west. Within the next fifty years the appointment of master of the grammar school of Greenock was

hampered by the stipulation that the master should thenceforth abandon the profane and unprofitable art of poem-making.\*

On leaving the manse Jean set up a day-school for teaching girls of her own degree reading, writing, and needlework. According to tradition it was situated among the notable houses of the quay-head. She had for a number of years presided over her samplers, quilting-frames, spelling-books and primers, before the great journey of her life was undertaken. She must have been hard upon middle age when she closed her school for six weeks, and travelled to London and back, in order to obtain an interview with Richardson, the creator of her idol, Clarissa. It has been questioned whether it was within her walking capability to accomplish the long journey at the rate of twenty miles a day, as it was accomplished by Helen Walker, the original of Jeanie Deans, impelled by a much more powerful motive. But, with an occasional "lift" from a coach or a chance traveller, it is quite possible that Jean Adam may have accom-

\* It is alleged that this story owes its origin to a mischievous jest.



plished her cherished purpose. She was very much the hare-brained, hardy woman who, for such a cause, would encounter the fatigue and danger that a long journey then involved. The matter, however, remains one of hypothesis; nobody can actually tell, at this date, whether Jean performed her exploit or not. Her scholars believed she performed it. And if she did, it may well be asked where—among the extremes of society which met in the London of Lord Chesterfield and George Whitefield, of Lady Mary Wortley Montague and Lady Huntingdon, of Vauxhall and Moorfields—could there be found a stranger figure than that of the travel-soiled, mazed Scotch schoolmistress? Of all the decorous, sentimental ladies who fluttered round this genius of a dapper little printer, and petted him to his heart's content—what worshipper so unsophisticated, so arch, and so likely to fill him with wondering trepidation as this wild, pure-minded, high-hearted Scotchwoman?

Jean had a little circle at home, in which she was known, loved, and well remembered. This included the kindred spirits among her scholars.

One day she introduced into their studies the startling novelty of reading aloud to them from Shakespeare. The play was *Othello*; and she read it with so much effect, and was so much moved by her own reading, and by Shakespeare's writing, that at last she "swerfed" away in the tumult of her thoughts and feelings. These were the days of fine-lady swooning. And Jean, with her ambition and her imperfect education, was not so circumstanced as to be above affectation, in spite of her natural sincerity. She had a craving for refinement, and refinement was then believed to culminate in that languishingly vague impersonation, "a delicate female." But she was rather out of order in appreciating Shakespeare so heartily. Hers was not the age of hearty enthusiasm for the dramatist, whom it mincingly termed "the Swan of Avon."

Jean indulged her scholars in other intellectual treats. She sang her own songs (would we had more of them to sing!) in her school-room "many a time." And we may be sure that she did not "swerf" away after singing one of them;



on the contrary, we may picture her nodding her head, beating time with her foot, and cracking her fingers, in the most gleeful satisfaction.

But the grim realities of life were fast coming on Jean. It so happens that the loveliest lyric on wedded love is believed to have been written by an unwedded woman—the song of wifely pride and tenderness that comes nearest to Burns’ “John Anderson,” is held to have been the utterance of the subtle sympathy and latent affection of a woman who never owned a husband. Of all Jean’s acquaintances, gentle and simple—merchants, masters of grammar-schools, and ship captains—not one sought, or at least was successful in the suit for, her hand. Yet, with her large-heartedness and quick impulsiveness—though these are towers of strength, if well restrained—Jean Adam was as little capable of standing alone in the world as the silliest and weakest of her sex. Among her many talents practical wisdom did not hold a place. That London journey, and the closing of her door for weeks beyond the brief space usually allotted for holidays, was a dubious step

as regards the prosperity of the school. Scarcely less doubtful was the reading of Shakespeare's play to the children of sternly matter-of-fact and rigidly-righteous folk, descendants of the play-banning Covenanters, in their chief seat, the West. Without question a new and more accommodating schoolmistress would be found, whose fruit and satin pieces, in the easily-dazzled eyes of the sea captains' young daughters, would put out fine linen quilting, and whose strength of mind would not be of such a nature as to lead her to fly in the face of their fathers' and mothers' principles with regard to the vanity of *Othello*.

What told sorest on Jean was an exceedingly rash speculation into which she entered. The single edition of her poems did not all get into the home market. Think of this lone woman—her hair growing grizzled under her *bon grace*—having herself rowed up, wind and tide in her favour, on a Wednesday half-holiday or a Saturday afternoon, to make searching inquiries of Mr. James Duncan in the Saltmarket as to the sale of her book, her anxiety for his

answers balancing any over-weening vanity of which she might ever have been guilty. Time has robbed these incidents of their prosaicness, but left them their poor human interest. Jean was sanguine still, however, and shipped the surplus copies of her poems to Boston in America, from which she never got any return of sale. In addition to the mortification and disappointment which this loss caused her, it swallowed up the little savings she had gathered; and thus she was left destitute when well advanced in years.

In her extremity she had no resource but to seek help from the old friends whom she seems to have more or less offended and alienated by her waywardness and eccentricity. She had now no home or resting-place among her lass-bairns at the quay-head of Crawfurdsdyke. Calm and storm might succeed each other on the watery highway; the golden sun might set and the silver moon rise behind the mountains of Cowal; Dutch and French skippers might take the place of the Highlandmen, and chatter their gibberish in room of the sputtered Gaelic; more and bigger ships, in full sail and with flags

and garlands flying at the masts, might ride in on the rising tide; and happy family groups might sally forth to welcome the returning sailors; but Jean Adam would not be there to see. She had ere this "taken her foot in her hand," according to the old half-piteous, half-scornful proverb, and gone trudging in sun and wind, in rain and snow, from clachan to village, from farm-town to laird's place, wherever she could hope to "fend" by such work as she was still able to do.

A townsman and gallant biographer of Jean Adam has tried to free her memory from the degradation of her having become a beggar at last. Nor is it at all likely that Jean was ever a beggar outright. But it is certain that she was a wandering hawker of whatever ability still remained to her to shape and sew, to bake and brew, to nurse the very young, and wait on the very old. The scant recollections which are handed down, sorrowful ones in their way, bear out this softened version of Jean's reduced condition. Mrs. Fullarton, an old pupil, told her daughter of Jean's coming to

her house in this character. Mrs. Fullarton had offered Jean old clothes, which she had at first proudly declined. But pressed by necessity or rebuked by her sensitive conscience for haughtiness of spirit unbecoming her situation, Jean had come back and taken the clothes away. This was natural behaviour on the part of a poor, half-dependent woman, but it was not the behaviour of an ordinary beggar.

Jean eventually returned to a harder state of service than that of her youth, when she was too old a woman to be capable of it, for her best days were long past. Her fingers were waxing stiff and her eyes dim. What had been but play to the light heart of youth, with all the world before it, was a dreary *darg* to the heavy heart that had known better things, and was now without any refuge, under the sun, save the grave. Probably it was because she was proud in her downfall—the hardness of her fate having soured the natural sweetness of her temper—that no friend interposed to prevent the end.

On the 2nd of April, 1765—in the spring, which is so softly balmy and tearfully bright in

that Scotland of the west—Jean stood once more within the shadow of King William's statue and of the grand mansions of the Virginian merchants. Stumbling into the presence of the merchants themselves, she went on in her faded tartan screen and draggled gown till she skirted the Trongate, and vanished in the crowd of the Gallowgate. She was more footsore than if she had made another journey to London, more faint-hearted than when she "swerfed" away after the reading of *Othello*. Her high spirit and tender heart were fairly broken. But a new dawn was breaking for her, and a Friend was waiting for her in a land that was far away, yet very near. Jean Adam was admitted into the poorhouse of Glasgow, by an order from two of the baillies of Greenock, as "a poor woman in distress, a stranger who had been wandering about." She died there the next day, and was buried by the parish.

Jean's champion attempts to establish the fact, that the poorhouse of Glasgow was then more of a hospital than a poorhouse, and that various persons, quite different from the modern



pauper, found refuge under its roof, and died in that shelter. Very possibly he is right. At the date of her death, the years since the '45 were not so many but that men and women more highly born and delicately nurtured than Jean had been, might have been thankful to live and die within those despised walls. Nevertheless, even a hospital and its bed were a woeful last home and bed for Jean Adam; and "a stranger who had been wandering about," was a woeful title for the author of "There's nae luck about the house."

In their subjects as well as their style Jean's published poems bear internal evidence of the source from which their inspiration was drawn. We have such titles as, "On Creation," "On Redemption," "On the Method of Grace," "On Abel," "On Joseph," "On Astrea," "On Lucretia," "On Cleopatra," and so forth. These poems are what might be expected—the unconscious reflection and echo of Jean's studies. They made no pretensions to originality, and the claim which was set up for them—that of correctness of phrase and propriety of figure—

would not get them a moment's hearing in the present day. Like most echoes, they are monotonous, formal, and inflated; frequently they are childish; occasionally they are quaint. The most quaint in plan are, "A Dialogue between the Soul and Curiosity," and "Curiosity and the Soul about the keeping of the Ten Commandments."

But it is unfair to judge Jean Adam by these poems. The English language was, in truth, a foreign tongue to her. She was not playfully coquetting with it, but struggling laboriously and painfully to master it, in such earnest, indeed, that she changed her very name to meet its supposed requirements—writing Christian and surname on her title-page, "Mistress *Jane Adams*." She might have succeeded in reading English with relish; but she could never write it without cramping impediment. But set her to her native dialect, and she could, and did, write very differently.

As there has been a renewed dispute about the authorship of "There's nae luck about the house," the writer of the present article begs to



state on what grounds the song is here attributed to Jean Adam.

No copy of the song is found either in Mickle's works or in Jean Adam's works printed while they lived. Burns wrote that "There's nae luck about the house," came on the streets as a street ballad about 1771-2—six or seven years after Jean Adam's death. Cromek claimed the song for Jean Adam on the ground of strong local tradition, and on the direct testimony of Jean Adam's pupil, Mrs. Fullarton, who declared that she had frequently heard Jean sing or repeat the song, and state that it was her own composition. This evidence was confirmed by fellow-pupils, and by Mrs. Fullarton's daughter, Mrs. Crawford, in the latter case with additional testimony. Mrs. Crawford, who had married into the family of Jean's early patrons, the Crawfurds of Cartsburn, wrote: "My aunt, Mrs. Crawford of Cartsburn, often sang it ['There's nae luck about the house'] as a song of Jean Adam's."

In 1806 Sim claimed the song as that of William Julius Mickle. The claim was chal-

lenged by Cromek, but this challenge was withdrawn when he was told that Sim had found two copies of the song among Mickle's papers in his handwriting, one of the copies bearing corrections; further, that Mrs. Mickle had said to Sim that the song was a Scotch song written by Mickle; that he had given her a copy, and explained the Scotch phrases to her, she being an Englishwoman; and finally, that Mrs. Mickle, *with a little assistance*, repeated the song to Sim.

This may sound at first positive proof, as it did to Cromek; but, besides the fact that the accident of handwriting has failed before now to constitute a claim of authorship, there is counter-proof, both internal and external, which contradicts Sim's conclusion.

What was supposed to be the original scroll of the song, from which the copy was judged—and rightly, in all probability—to be a corrected copy, not only differs from the popular version, but has phrases and words so thoroughly *un-Scotch*, and so many gross mistakes both in sense and spelling, that it is very difficult to

imagine how a man capable of writing the song could have committed them.\*

The scenery, the incidents, the expressions of the song, are thoroughly identified with the west coast of Scotland; so is the very name of the hero. Mickle was a native of Langholm, in the inland county of Dumfries; he was some time in Edinburgh, and then went to England, where he spent the greater part of his life; and there is no evidence that he ever visited Greenock.

Mrs. Mickle seems to imply that the song was written and given to her by her husband not earlier than the time of their marriage, which took place in 1781-2, *ten or eleven years after the date* when Burns declares that the song was sung in the streets. Between the time of Mr. Mickle's marriage and the time when she gave these answers to Sim's questions more than twenty years had passed, and she had suffered from an attack of paralysis. There is hardly need to add the observation of David Hume, that "Mrs. Mickle was not a person whose evidence was of much consequence at any time."

\* "Jean Adam," by Alexander Rodger.

The explanation which has been suggested is, that Mickle, more than half Anglicised by a long residence in England, took the song rapidly down from the mouth of a street singer, and copied his first writing, with a few corrections. The Scotch song to which Mrs. Mickle alluded, if it ever had an existence, might have been one of her husband's old English ballads—a very different style of song, yet apt to be confused by her with Jean Adam's "There's nae luck about the house," in a way not incomprehensible on the part of an Englishwoman.

Tradition has something to say as to the originals of the song. They were popularly held to be a couple named Colin and Jean Campbell, who lived at Crawfurdsdyke. "Jean made a great work about her man," and no necromancy was needed on the part of her neighbour and namesake to interpret and utter Jean Campbell's feelings on the return of her husband from one of his longer voyages.

The local scenery throws light on various details of the song; whilst other details, graphic and still more minute, illustrate the

prosperous middle-class condition of the heroine and the hero.

“ And are ye sure the news is true ?

And are ye sure he's weel ? ”

the song begins in a fond realisation of bliss, so great that, for a moment, it cannot be credited.

“ Is this a time to think o' wark ? ”

follows, in the full extravagance of joy.

“ Ye jauds, fling by your wheel ; ”

and then the triumphant, loyal lilt of the chorus, glad in proportion to the former rueful, lonely independence, sounds out clearly :—

“ For there's nae luck about the house,

There's nae luck at a' ;

There's little pleasure in the house

*When our gudeman's awa'.*

Is this a time to think o' wark

When Colin's at the door ?

Rax me my cloak——”

The singer has servants to do her bidding ; she has already issued her orders to her lasses :—

“ I'll to the quay,

And see him come ashore.”

The "bigonet," or high-cauled, starched matron's cap, above the comely face, now flushed with honest delight; the "bishop-satin gown;" the "turkey slippers," and "hose o' pearl blue," were more or less costly articles of dress, proving the rank and wealth of the woman who could afford to wear them. So, too, a hundred and thirty years ago, were little Kate's "Sunday gown" and Jock's "button coat." The motive for putting them on in each case is the artless art of a heart which both loves and honours its master:—

"It's a' to please my ain gudeman,  
For he's been lang awa'."

The two fat hens reposing, unconscious of their doom, on "the bauk," are a picture in one line of homely "couthiness," and the record that the hens have been fed,

"This month and mair"

pleasantly suggests how Colin has been watched and waited for.

"Mak haste and thraw their necks about"

sounds like a cruel summary sentence of death;

but the wholesale destruction was in the best of causes,—

“That Colin weel may fare ;  
And spread the table neat and clean,  
Gar ilka thing look braw.”

How much of the mistress survives in the wife ! The duty was discharged ungrudgingly ; and graceful was the compliment paid to the enviable Colin. He must have been a good fellow to have been so doted on after many years had tried his worth. But it is also on the cards that he may have been a gruff and surly bear, or a dry and stiff dog of a man. Still the wistful question is sweet :—

“For wha can tell how Colin fared  
When he was far awa’ ?  
“Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,  
His breath like caller air—”

and the joyful woman runs on—

“*His very foot has music in’t*  
As he comes up the stair.”

This innocently insane delusion of the wife’s, chiming in as it does with a host of similar



hallucinations, has made so deep an impression, that Jean's townsman thinks it right to append an explanation making known its peculiar significance. Those big, braw houses on the quay-head, with their foreground of landlocked water—ship and boat and mountain, seen doubled by their shadows—and their background of wooded heights and flowery gardens (full of Ayrshire roses as well as cockle-shells), had also wide outside stairs, with steps of sounding Norway deal, on which children played and women sat and worked, and which Colin, coming back to his jewel of a wife, might climb two at a time.

The last verse is the climax of the whole—the ineffable melting of the tremulous laughter into a sudden shower of tears, all glistening as they temper the broad sunshine of the heart,—

“ And will I see his face again ?  
And will I hear him speak ?  
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thocht,  
In troth I'm like to greet,”

followed up quickly by the recovered bell-like ring,—

“ For there’s nae luck about the house,  
There’s nae luck at a’ ;  
There’s little pleasure in the house  
When our gudeman’s awa’.”

---

## THERE’S NAE LUCK ABOUT THE HOUSE.

AND are ye sure the news is true ?  
And are ye sure he’s weel ?  
Is this a time to think o’ wark ?  
Ye jauds, fling by your wheel.  
Is this a time to think o’ wark,  
When Colin’s at the door ?  
Rax me my cloak, I’ll to the quay,  
And see him come ashore.  
For there’s nae luck about the house,  
There’s nae luck at a’ ;  
There’s little pleasure in the house  
When our gudeman’s awa’.

And gie to me my bigonet,  
My bishop-satin gown ;  
For I maun tell the baillie’s wife  
That Colin’s come to town.  
My turkey slippers maun gae on,  
My hose o’ pearl blue ;  
It’s a’ to please my ain gudeman,  
For he’s baith leal and true.

Rise up and mak a clean fireside,  
Put on the muckle pot ;  
Gie little Kate her Sunday gown  
And Jock his button coat ;  
And mak their shoon as black as slaes,  
Their hose as white as snaw ;  
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,  
For he's been lang awa'.

There's twa fat hens upo' the bauk,  
They've fed this month and mair,  
Mak haste and thraw their necks about.  
That Colin weel may fare ;  
And spread the table neat and clean,  
Gar ilka thing look braw ;  
For wha can tell how Colin fared  
When he was far awa' ?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,  
His breath like caller air ;  
His very foot has music in't  
As he comes up the stair.  
And will I see his face again ?  
And will I hear him speak ?  
I'm downricht dizzy wi' the thocht,  
In troth I'm like to greet.

Since Colin's weel, I'm weel content,

I hae nae mair to crave :

Could I but live to mak him blest,

I'm blest aboon the lave :

And will I see his face again ?

And will I hear him speak ?

I'm downricht dizzy wi' the thocht,

In troth I'm like to greet.

For there's nae luck, &c.

## MRS. COCKBURN.

1712—1794.

IN the heart of the Southern Highlands, having the swelling hills of Ettrick,—a portion of what is by courtesy styled the Forest, where bracken is almost the only “bield” on the hill-side, and where there is a continual “rowing” of water and bleating of sheep,—every hope, cleugh, and water has its ballad story. More old castles, peel towers, and turreted country-houses, are to be seen in their ruins, near what was once the Marches, than in any other district of the same extent in Scotland.

Within the mansion-house of Robert Rutherford, of Fairnalee, almost within sound of both “Gala water” and “Tweed’s sillar stream,” Alison Rutherford was born in the autumn of

1712, two years after Jean Adam was born in the sea captain's house at Crawfurdsdyke.

A great though gradual change had already come over the wild debateable land between Scotland and England, with its bold clans, lawless but for border law. Reiving and harrying had at last come to an end, and if men still "lifted" horse or sheep, or clout of household plenishing, the deed got its right name, and the thief his desert, even though he were an Englishman in Scotland or a Scotchman in England, and were not caught red-handed. Sheep-farming and "planting" had taken the place of more exciting enterprises. Gentlemen, indeed, still rode with pistols at their saddle-bows, and walked with swords at their sides. But they did not fire their pistols unless set upon by footpads during a journey, nor did they draw their swords save on extreme provocation, while their brains were muddled in a brawl, or in a set and formal duel arranged by mutual friends, and attended with all the ceremonies and courtesies of polite warfare.

As great a change had come over the women.

They no longer needed to place a supper dish of spurs before their men, and to accompany the expressive hint with a delicate reminder that the nights were moonless. Nor did they now spend their time looking over the battlements in order to be the first to give warning when a rival chief or laird, with his moss-troopers, threatened a descent on flocks and herds. The women had ceased to be shut up for months of sieges, with the making of lint and the dressing of wounds for their principal occupation and entertainment. Their ordinary avocations no longer consisted in spinning yarn and carding wool, in baking and brewing, and in cooking savoury messes on a grand rough scale. Their knowledge was got from other and considerably more extensive sources than comfortable monks of Jedburgh and Dryburgh, and battered harpers. It was not even derived in any large measure from the monks' successors, though Boston was then minister of Ettrick, and was rearing a race stern and devout, long to linger in the lonely farm-houses and the shepherds' huts, from one of which James Hogg sprang.



In the same way the Border women's diversions had come to be of a different kind from showing their mantles and fluttering streamers at football matches and weapon-shaws—notwithstanding that the last were only dying out. The daughters of the Scotts, Kers, Elliots, Rutherfurds, and Pringles saw the battlements on their towers or the squares of their out-houses crumbling in decay, and walked safely in terraced gardens, or drove in coaches and did their shopping at Hawick or Melrose. They intermitted their spinning for tambouring and knotting, they concocted their cosmetics, as they cooked, by deputy, and from elaborate recipes written in feebly flowing Italian hands, with great defiance of spelling rules. They went to neighbours' dinners and gave dinners and even drums to neighbours in return, and they braved the danger and discomfort of bridle roads and country inns (where friends' houses did not chance to stand conveniently in the way), in order that the young people of the family might have the benefit of seeing and being

seen at Edinburgh assemblies.\* The daughters of the country-houses were educated by their fathers' chaplains and their brothers' tutors, when they had brothers, as well as by their mothers' waiting-women; and when the family happened to be of more than ordinary intelligence, or to be of a decidedly studious turn, the daughters were fairly well-read and well-informed women. Not only were Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Prior, and Addison on many bookshelves in lairds' and ladies' closets, but, though the women of the nobility and gentry had not a classical education, they frequently learnt French and Italian, and were very conversant with the former. This was not so much because of the obsolete national alliances which have scattered French words broadcast over the field of the Scotch language, as because of the influence of the *vieille cour* of the great Louis on manners, and the effects of its *beaux esprits* on literature, which were felt as far as

\* In the letter of a Frenchman who visited Edinburgh at this period we find a list of young beauties, and in the list is the name of "Alice Rutherford."

Scotland. The number of soldiers of fortune belonging to the upper classes who served campaigns abroad and came home with foreign polish increased the influence. Corneille, Racine, and Molière, La Fontaine and La Bruyère, were as much the fashion in the Scotch rank that pretended to fashion when Alison Rutherford was young, as they were in English high society when Lady Mary Wortley Montague and Mrs. Delany grew up.

Alison Rutherford, of Fairnalee, was not a Burd Ailie of the old ballads, neither was she a yeoman squire's daughter. The Border lairds were as tenacious of their gentle blood and their kinship to the heads of their clans as ever were the duihnewassels of the Northern Highlands. The lairds were distinctly of the quality, and when their sons, and still more their daughters, condescended to appear at horse-races, wrestling-matches, markets, and elections, it was as kings and queens stooping from their dais and their chairs of state.

No detailed record has come to light of Alison Rutherford's youth. She herself writes

to her dear friend, the Rev. Dr. Douglas, of Galashiels, "I can this minute figure myself running as fast as a greyhound, in a hot summer day, to have the pleasure of plunging into Tweed to cool me. I see myself made up like a ball, with my feet wrapt in my petticoat, on the declivity of the hill at Fairnalee, letting myself roll down to the bottom, with infinite delight. As for the chase of the silver spoon at the end of the rainbow, nothing could exceed my ardour, except my faith, which created it. I can see myself the first favourite at Lamotte's dancing, and remember turning pale and red with the ambition of applause."

"I can remember, when I was seven or eight years old, there was a very ancient gardener at Fairnalee, almost blind; he employed me to clip his white beard, every Saturday, which office I performed with the greatest pride and pleasure."

"I am not sure if ever I was so vain of any lover or admirer as I was of the heavenly affection of your predecessor, whom, by his own assignation, I rode over from Fairnalee at six in the morning to meet. He had his fine, white,

bushy hair under a fine Holland nightcap, sheets, shirt as white as snow, a large Bible open on a table, by his bed, with his watch. He embraced me with fervour, and said I would not repent losing some hours sleep to see for the last time an old man, who was going home. He naturally fell into a description of his malady, checked himself, and said it was a shame to complain of a bad road to a happy home; 'and there,' says he, 'is my passport,' pointing to his Bible; 'let me beg, my young friend, you will study it: you are not yet a Christian' (it was true), 'but you have an inquiring mind, and cannot fail to be one.' Then he prayed fervently for me, and said he was hasted; blessed some particular friends, and bade me farewell. I never was so happy in a morning as when I was riding home."

But these are hints, more than aught else; and we must guess at the bud from the fruit, and draw inferences from what is known of the world in which she moved. It is clear that her judgment was early strengthened, and her wit sharpened, by cultivation. Her

character, her talents and accomplishments fitted her to be a leader in the most philosophic and brilliant circles of her day. Alison Rutherford might sleep in an attic room at Fairnalee, and sit on a hard, straight-backed chair, but she was not an ignorant rustic girl any more than a heroine of mediæval romance. Quiet times had somewhat thinned the country-houses in the Forest—the roads were execrable, and the fords dangerous—but when the country gentry did reach each other their hospitality was of the most cordial and generous description. Stray guests sat at their hosts' tables for weeks and months, and poor relations lived for years with their more prosperous kindred. It is impossible to read Alison Cockburn's letters without being struck with the close and kindly intimacies maintained from youth to age between the Forest families. To these frank, familiar friendships begun betimes, and so admirable in their constancy, might be owing much of the geniality which rendered her one of the warmest-hearted, while at the same time one of the wittiest women of her generation.



Within the circle of Fairnalee were Yair, Torwoodlee, Haining, Crichton, Elibank. Minto was not very far away ; but only as woman and child could the two gentlewomen who wrote the sister sets of "The Flowers of the Forest" have met in youth, for Alison Rutherford was fifteen years older than Jean Elliot.

Alison Rutherford's claims to beauty must have been remarkable, judging from the beauty recorded of Alison Cockburn in her venerable age. She had auburn hair, the gold of which was unsilvered at eighty, and which she wore always rolled up over a toupee. Her complexion was probably the pure red and white which most frequently accompanies such hair, and which distinguished Grisell Baillie. Her features were aquiline, with a likeness to those of Queen Elizabeth—a resemblance which she increased in after-life by her fancy of wearing the sleeves of her dress puffed out at the shoulders in the fashion of Queen Bess's era. Mrs. Cockburn's portrait, painted by Anne Forbes,—who belonged to a branch of the Culloden Forbeses, and was connected both with the painter Aikman and



the Chalmerses, Mrs. Cockburn's familiar friends, —certainly does not flatter the sitter. It was painted when she was upwards of fifty, that epoch of middle life most trying to the portrait-painter as well as to the sitter. She is represented in what is now an extinct garment,—a striped silk sacque, fitting tight to the waist in front, but hanging loose from the neck behind, and terminating at the elbows in three wide frills. Over the sacque, across the shoulders and the prominent bust, she wears a black lace shawl or tippet. Her hair is turned back, and covered by a flat cap or hood, the ends of which meet beneath her chin. The upper part of the face is fine, though the eyebrows slant downwards instead of arching. The lower part, however, is spoilt, so far as beauty is concerned, by the artist having taken the face in profile, thus exposing the straight line of the short upper lip with the projection of the under one, a peculiarity which gives character to the face, but detracts from its beauty. A still greater defect is at the same time rendered patent—that of the retreating and

slightly double chin. The whole portrait gives the idea of a well-bred, frank, somewhat saucy woman.

A dignified and charming young beauty of the Borders was this that bloomed within the walls of Fairnalee. With her bell-hoop, her gauze "tail" gathered up over her left arm, and her knots at shoulder, breast, and elbow, she was a person of no small distinction; and to secure one of those riband knots on back and breast by begging, borrowing, stealing, fleeching or fighting, might well be a brag with the young Border "swankies" of her generation. Her own account is, "I was a prude when young, and remarkably grave; it was owing to a consciousness that I could not pass unobserved, and a fear of giving offence or incurring censure. I loved dancing exceedingly, because I danced well."

Few particulars are to be found of her brothers and sisters. The small family scraps may be shortly noted here. It was on the occasion of an unsuccessful love-suit of her brother—the future laird—that Mrs. Cockburn is said to have

written her clever parody of "Nancy's to the greenwood gane." A similar suit of his must have prospered in a different quarter. He not only succeeded to the lairdship of Fairnalee, where his gay Edinburgh sister was in the habit of visiting him, but to his (childless?) widow—"the jolly lady of Fairnalee\*"—Mrs. Cockburn left a bequest of twenty pounds for mourning, with the charge of her favourite cat. There are also traces of another brother, whose daughter, Anne Rutherford, married Mark Pringle of Crichton. The latter seems to have been a son of the Mark Pringle who fought a duel with Sir Walter Scott's great-grand-uncle, Scott of Raeburn, in a field near Hawick. Having killed his man, the elder Mark went abroad, and was, for a time, as some said, a slave in Barbary. Afterwards he made a fortune in Spain, and returned to buy Crichton, and marry and settle in the Forest. So far as can be made out, this Mark was the father of the

\* This lady is said to have been of Dutch extraction, and by her eccentricities of speech and writing, to have caused much amusement to her friends, with whom she was very popular.

Scotch judge, Andrew Pringle of Haining, Lord Alemoor, who was a privileged and intimate friend of Mrs. Cockburn's. Anne Rutherford or Pringle, was the mother of a third Mark and of Anne Pringle, the grand nephew and niece of Mrs. Cockburn, so often mentioned in her letters. Mrs. Cockburn had possibly another sister—the same whose death in Edinburgh is briefly noticed in one of the letters, and who may have been the mother of the “nephew Peter Inglis,” and the married nieces “Simpson and Clerk,” repeatedly mentioned. It is hardly necessary to state that, through Sir Walter Scott's mother, a Rutherford, as well as through her kindred, the Swintons, Sir Walter and Mrs. Cockburn counted cousinship.

Something more definite has been gathered concerning an early lover of Alison Rutherford's; and on the story there hangs a speculation with regard to the immediate origin of her set of “The Flowers of the Forest.” In a lively letter to her old friend David Hume, written when she was upwards

of fifty years old—ten years after she became a widow—she draws a bright picture of one of the heroes of her fancy, Rousseau, and implores David to bring Rousseau with him to Scotland, and then, as if from a sudden pathetic impulse, she writes, “I am sure he is like my John Aikman.” The reference is to an old story of one who died about the time of Alison Rutherford’s marriage, thirty years before. She seems to imply that the story had been well known in the Forest, and that David Hume, from his former connection with the neighbourhood, must have heard the details, and would remember them. But there is another interesting letter—not addressed to David Hume, but to Aikman’s own relative, and Mrs. Cockburn’s great friend and “Brownie,” kind-hearted Bobby Chalmers. This letter was written ten years later, forty years after the death of Aikman, when Mrs. Cockburn was sixty-four years of age, and found her health beginning to fail. In characteristic terms, with mingled jest and earnest, she thus remembers a promise, and disposes of one side of a corre-

spondence which she desired should not pass into less sympathetic hands :—

“ For Mr. Chalmers, with a parcel.

“ As I had a warning bell in the shape, or rather sound, of a cough lately, a day in bed put me in remembrance of all I ought to do beneath the sun before I went above it; amongst the rest I remembered my promise to you, and in doing so, remembered with some satisfaction that I never broke a promise in all my long life. No doubt you would think yourself greatly obliged to me if, in my last will, I bequeathed you some hundreds of the king's image in gold or paper—how much more are you obliged to me for sending you the soul of a man superior to all kings for real worth and native humour! If I were not certain that you will truly value the gift, you should not have it: no, indeed for I much value them; and so you may see by the way I dispose of them. While my friends flourished round me I was a conceited creature. I set a value on myself because they did, and I thought them perfect judges. Now I find it was mere partiality. My value is sunk as they



disappeared. John Aikman's affection, tenderness, and sympathy for me surpassed the love of women! The pleasing big tear to his memory only allows me to bid you adieu. Continue to be as benevolent as he was. Adieu."

This John Aikman was the son of Aikman the painter, the friend of Allan Ramsay, Thomson, Pope, and Somerville, and the grandson of Aikman of Cairney, in Forfarshire, an advocate of some eminence at the Scottish bar. John Aikman is said to have been a young man of great promise. He died in his twenty-second year in London, where his father had established himself in the practice of his profession. The son died only a few days before the father, and only a month or two after the marriage of Alison Rutherford to Patrick Cockburn in 1731. The bodies of father and son were brought down to Scotland, and interred together in the Greyfriars churchyard, where an epitaph, penned by Mallet, was inscribed on their tombstone:—

"Dear to the good and wise, despised by none,  
Here sleep in peace the father and the son ;



Of virtue, as by nature, close allied,  
The painter's genius, but without the pride ;  
With unambitious wit afraid to shine,  
Honour's dear light, and friendship's warmth divine.  
The son, fair rising, knew too short a date,  
But oh! much more severe the father's fate ;  
He saw him torn untimely from his side,  
Felt all a father's anguish, wept and died."

The correspondence between John Aikman and Alison Rutherford must have taken place when he was in the dawn of manhood, and she was in her girlhood. From the manner in which she mentions his name to David Hume, it is clear that the attachment was well known to their friends. Whether it was the prospect of Aikman's premature death, or some other obstacle, which prevented the natural conclusion to the correspondence, cannot be ascertained. But with regard to the date when Alison Rutherford wrote her "Flowers of the Forest," it has always been believed in her family that the song was written before her marriage; the very turret-chamber in the old house of Fairnalee being still pointed out by her descendants as the scene of its composition. If this tradition is founded on fact, the song must have

been written close upon the time of the writer's parting from John Aikman. A further tradition mixes up a nameless man with the origin of the song. A gentleman, passing down one of the remoter glens round Fairnalee, heard a solitary shepherd, on the lea, play on the flute a plaintive air, which struck the stranger's fancy. He asked the name of the air, and found that it was "The Flowers of the Forest." There was such an old ballad—a wailing lament which had perished before the collection of the minstrelsy of the Border, saving the two lines that are said to be the key-note of Jean Elliot's song, and two other lines which were recovered by Sir Walter Scott;—

(Now) "I ride single in my saddle,  
For the Flowers of the Forest are a' wede awa'."

Having sufficient skill to catch the air by hearing it several times played, the gentleman repeated it to Alison Rutherford, and begged her to write a copy of verses to suit it. She recognised the air, and recalled a few lines of the old ballad; and, in compliance with the gentleman's entreaty, produced her "Flowers

of the Forest." Could this gentleman, with the fine musical ear, the love of verse, and possessing influence with Alison Rutherford, have been John Aikman, on his last visit to the Forest? And is it possible that the song owes its special pathos to the personal sorrow of the writer? If such a gentleman ever existed, and if he were not John Aikman, he could hardly have been Patrick Cockburn, for *he* would not have remained a nameless man.

Against this speculation there must be set the narrative of Mr. Chambers. In an account of Mrs. Cockburn, which embodied the recollections of Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Chambers states that the occasion of Alison Rutherford's writing her "Flowers of the Forest" was a commercial disaster, by which seven lairds of ancient family in the district were rendered insolvent in one year.

There is also the silence of Mrs. Cockburn and her relations as to any personal ground for the famous lines.

These arguments are open to objections, and even point to an opposite conclusion. Under a

striking figure the ancient tragedy indicated the untimely death of men, cut off in their prime by the cruel ravages of war, on Flodden, or some equally fatal field. It is not at all probable that a girl of seventeen or eighteen, even supposing her sensible and alive to every shade of feeling, would wrest the figure into an expression of regret for a worldly loss, from which she could not have been an individual sufferer. If Alison Rutherford's "Flowers of the Forest" took its rise from no calamity more primitive and sentimental than a widespread local bankruptcy (the present writers do not attempt to account for this rumour of the song's origin\*), then it is most natural to con-

\* Unless an explanation is found in a sentence of an undated letter which refers to Mrs. Cockburn's acquaintances as "all either fools or knaves, *as most are bankrupts*." In another paragraph of the same letter she writes, in allusion to a lady, "give her the song then, and as she has a taste for soft sadness, you may get the favour of Lady Fair to show you my Farewell to Fairmalee, dated 1st November, 1778." Against the probabilities of either of these songs being "The Flowers of the Forest," it must be remembered that Mrs. Cockburn, writing in that year of bankruptcy, mentions 1778 as a past date; and also that "The Flowers of the Forest" had been published about thirteen years earlier than 1778, in or near 1765. Under its proper title it was almost certainly already well

clude that the song was not written in Alison Rutherford's maiden days, as the first half of the tradition declares, but that it was the work of some of the visits paid by Mrs. Cockburn, in mature years, to her old home of Fairnlee. However, if the first half of the tradition fall to the ground, by what rule will the last stand?

As to the silence of Mrs. Cockburn and her relatives on the subject, one circumstance must be borne in mind. The marriage of Alison Rutherford to another suitor soon afterwards was calculated to shut her friends' mouths, upon grounds of common prudence and delicacy, with regard to all matters concerning her former unfortunate attachment. Her own mouth was not shut; but she only opened it after a long interval of years, and even then her words were not without reserve. Like many people who are outwardly frank, Mrs. Cockburn always shows reserve in discussing her deeper personal feelings. She pathetically sums-up John

known to Dr. Douglas, and very possibly known also to the lady for whose poetic taste he was catering.

Aikman's regard for her, but she is scrupulously silent as to the measure of her regard for the dead man. We may note another paradox in her character. Although she was pleased with herself and all around her, she was yet essentially a humble-minded woman. Her letters are singularly free from the embarrassment of self-consciousness, and in this lies one great source of their charm. Her authorship of one of the sets of "The Flowers of the Forest," published in her lifetime, seems to have been at once known; but, with one exception, there is not a word in her letters about her "Flowers of the Forest," nor a tittle of evidence that she considered it of such value that a full and particular confession of the circumstances under which it was written, and of the feelings which it was designed to express, should be put on record.

Alison Rutherford was not left to bloom long at Fairnalee. Whether her heart were light or heavy, she was married in March, 1731,\* to Mr.

\* There is a difficulty about the date of her marriage. The marriage register gives it as 1731,—she herself uniformly gives the date two years earlier.



Patrick Cockburn, who had been called to the Scotch bar a few years before. He was a son of the Lord Justice Clerk and a cadet of the house of Ormiston.\* Her name is thenceforth linked with Edinburgh, where she was not only a lady of quality and a *bel esprit*, but a large-hearted, blithe-tempered woman. According to Sir Walter Scott, she helped to mould and direct the social life of the old, aristocratic parlours of Edinburgh, as the De Rambouillets and the Dudevants had prevailed and ruled with a rod of bright steel in the *salons* of Paris.

It was the old Edinburgh of the '15 and the '45—walled Edinburgh,—the High Street and the Canongate being still in the sunset of their glory. High heads yet looked down out of the crumbling piles, when the sweet scent of roses and hay in the Queensberry Gardens

\* Mrs. Cockburn makes the following commentary on her marriage:—"I was married, properly speaking, to a man of seventy-five—my father-in-law. I lived with him four years, and as the ambition had seized me to make him fond of me, knowing also nothing could please his son so much, I bestowed all my time and study to gain his approbation. He disapproved of plays and assemblies; I never went to one."



was mingling with the foul smell of the city gutters.

The Cockburns of Ormiston were of strong Whig and Presbyterian principles, as well as of high repute at the Scotch bar. Mr. Patrick was commissioner to the Duke of Hamilton (who married Elizabeth Gunning). He was himself a Hamilton on the mother's side, the Lord Justice having married Lady Susan Hamilton, daughter of the Earl of Haddington. Patrick Cockburn is said to have kept the Duke back from the intrigues before the '45, after which his grace had hankered. A persuasive man and a safe adviser, therefore, was Mr. Patrick, but little more than this is known of him.\*

Out at Ormiston the young wife was in the midst of the Murray Keiths, the Dicks, and the Dalrymples, to whom she formed a strong and lasting attachment. Very likely she ran with the rest of the world to stare at the Wilderness Garden, which Lord Grange was amusing himself in laying out; little thinking that he

\* "I was twenty years united to a lover and a friend," thirty-three years after his death his widow recalls affectionately.

was yet to abduct his own wife, however desperate a virago, and banish her, without sentence of court, to a wilder wilderness.

Mrs. Cockburn seems to have been quite free from the Jacobite inclinations liberally attributed to the women of gifts and graces in these days. Perhaps too little has been said of the "canny" Tory ladies who clearly foresaw the end from the beginning, and did their best to win their rashly loyal or thick-headed husbands from their dangerous political bent. Too little has also been said of the more suitably-mated "cadgie" Whig ladies who entered warmly into the strife for Protestant and constitutional freedom. These fair Whigs on a pinch lent their husbands the invaluable aid of their lively tongues and pens in the production of those Whig squibs and lampoons which are now forgotten. The Jacobite songs in the end weighed down the balance by the irresistible pathos of "the troubles" of the cause which was royal and was lost.

Few men in Edinburgh could have had a clearer head than Alison Cockburn to detect

the halting arguments and deride the absurdities of her enemies. With what mingled feelings she must have regarded that march down the Canongate, with the red lion banners and the white rose badges, of Macdonalds and Camerons, Murrays, Drummonds, Mars and Wemysses, as they carried their blue-eyed Corydon, Prince Charlie, to a week's lodging in the Holyrood of his ancestors. Though many eyes have wept and many hearts have bled for it, the procession had glaring flaws and mortifying *contretemps* standing out in the eyes of the hostile and scornful Whigs who watched it from the background. No woman in the gude town, with its hosts of lawyers pleading constitutional right and justice in its ears, was more likely than Alison Cockburn to enjoy a little mischievous mockery at the solemn gala and its deficiencies and failures. None was in greater danger of abusing the immunity secured by her sex and station than the petted beauty of Fairnalee and the spoilt dame of Edinburgh.

Mistress Cockburn had chosen to get quit of a little of the restlessness and excitement of

the citizens during the siege of their castle, by riding out and making a call at Ravelston, where her kindred, the Keiths, were known to be on the opposite side in politics from her and her husband. But then as now, blood was thicker than water, and the half-declared fervour of the Keiths for Prince Charlie afforded a delightful opportunity for their clever cousin to twit them with his imperfections and those of his cause. Having accomplished her purpose, Mistress Cockburn was riding home again in the Ravelston coach, when it was stopped at the Port by the Highland guard, waving in tartans and bristling with claymores.

Judge of Mistress Cockburn's consternation when she heard the grim officer on guard propose to search the lady for Whig letters! She was hysterical—half with smothered laughter, half with angry tears of real distress for herself and her friends. She knew very well all the time that she had imprudently stowed in her pocket a parody on Prince Charlie's Proclamation, which she had written with great conceit to the tune of "Clout the Caldron," and which it

is possible she had just been flourishing in the eyes and the ears of the indignant Keiths.

A parody, still in existence, has been almost identified as this unlucky effusion of Alison Cockburn's:—

“Have you any laws to mend,  
Or have you any grievance?  
I’m a hero to my trade,  
And truly a most leal prince.  
Would you have war, would you have peace?  
Would you be free from taxes?  
Come chapping to my father’s door,  
You need not doubt of access.

“Religion, law, and liberty,  
Ye ken are bonnie words, sirs;  
They shall be all made sure to you  
If ye’ll fight wi’ your swords, sirs.  
The nation’s debt we soon shall pay,  
If you’ll support our right, boys;  
No sooner we are brought in play,  
Than all things shall be tight, boys.

“Ye ken that by a Union law,  
Your ancient kingdom’s undone;  
That all your ladies, lords, and lairds,  
Gang up and live in London.  
Nae longer that we will allow,  
For crack—it goes asunder,  
What took sic time and pains to do,  
And let the world wonder.

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“ And for your mair encouragement,  
Ye shall be pardoned byganes :  
Nor mair fight on the Continent,  
And leave behind your dry banes.  
Then come away, and dinna stay,—  
What gars ye look sae loundert ?  
I'd have ye run, and not delay,  
To join my father's standard.”

It was a mild and ladylike squib in comparison with many others, but it was not likely to be swallowed by the hot-headed victors. Mr. Patrick, who had kept his Grace of Hamilton out of the broil, might not approve of being dragged into the thick of it by the rashness of his wife, although she was on the right side.

After Mrs. Cockburn had trembled in her mittens and *calèche*, the Ravelston arms on the coach saved her from the indignity of being personally searched. One may well believe that when she next wrote a parody on the Pretender to the tune of “Clout the Caldron,” or any other, she would not ride abroad with it in her pocket—at any rate not till the rebels were well on their march to Derby.

Some years after the last Jacobite had suffered, Mr. Patrick Cockburn fell ill. After a long

illness, he died at Musselburgh in 1753, leaving Mrs. Cockburn a widow at forty-one years of age, with one child—Adam, a lad of twenty-one, and an officer in a dragoon regiment.

Twelve years after her husband's death, and ten years after Miss Jean Elliot of Minto is supposed to have written her "Flowers of the Forest," Mrs. Cockburn suffered her set, which is generally believed to have been written twelve or thirteen years earlier than Miss Jean Elliot's song, to get into print. She acknowledged, or at least did not repudiate, the authorship of it. She was probably already acquainted with that new "old ballad" of her Forest, which, while anonymous, had at once become very popular; but the circumstance would only form an inducement for the publication of her own entirely different set.

Sir Walter Scott wrote long ago with regard to Mrs. Cockburn that "she maintained an extensive correspondence, which, if it continue to exist, must contain many things highly curious and interesting." A portion of her unpublished letters, extending over a space of thirty years,



and until within two years of her death, we are glad to say has been recovered.

The present writers, having, through the kindness of friends, got access to these letters, cannot help thinking that they must be acceptable to the reading public. It has, however, been found impossible to give the whole letters here, owing to the ill-proportioned material which would thus be added to the volumes. As the next best thing, room has been made for extracts that surely need no apology. Mrs. Cockburn tells the story of her later life infinitely better than any other could do it for her. The woman lives again in her letters; and this not merely in her solid judgment, her quick intelligence and playful fancy, but in her broad Christian humanity, her merry heart, and her magnanimity, patience, and sweetness in old age and bereavement. Sir Walter Scott remarked that to his mind her great talent in conversation was unlike anything English, and came very near to that of a polished Frenchwoman. Certainly Mrs. Cockburn's letters, written very much as she

spoke, and without the most distant view to publication, bear an affinity to the best French letters. Their happy turns, their gallant graciousness (there is no other word for the quality than this word gallant), their acuteness of observation and of feeling, tempered with rarely-failing charity, together with their arch humour, justify a comparison with the best French letters; but withal, Alison Cockburn's letters show an amount of strong sense and pawkiness which is peculiarly Scotch.

The letters—many of them not longer than notes—are principally addressed to Mr. Chalmers, a solicitor who lived in Adam's Buildings. There are some recollections of Bobby Chalmers afloat to this day. He was of humbler origin than the good society in which he moved, but he was exceedingly popular in it, because his vanity furnished him with abundant capacity to serve as a butt, while his obliging disposition, in which indeed his vanity might be an element, made him an inexhaustible granter of favours. The following anecdote is told of him. Having paid a visit to London and gone to a masquerade

(both visit and masquerade, by the way, are mentioned in one of Mrs. Cockburn's letters, some wag of a countryman who happened to be present wrote in chalk letters on the back of the owner's coat, "Little Bobby Chalmers, from Edinburgh." Many of the masquerading Englishmen carried out the joke by going up to the stranger, shaking his hand, and saying, "Glad to see you, Mr. Chalmers. How are all friends in Auld Reekie?" Bobby, unaware that he carried his visiting-card on his back, was flattered by the general recognition of him, which he attributed to his extraordinary merits, and to the fame that had travelled before him so far as London.

It were idle to ask whether Mrs. Cockburn allowed herself to be tickled by the weaknesses of her friends. In the teeth of possible ridicule, her biographers are fain to hold that she was too loyal and generous to pick out the holes in her friends' armour, and show up their infirmities and absurdities.

Another supposition must remain unsettled—whether or not Mr. Chalmers's kinsmanship

to John Aikman, and the fact that he had been in the confidence of the couple who were early severed, did not lie at the root of the pleasant intimacy. One conclusion is unmistakable. Mrs. Cockburn cherished for Mr. Chalmers a sincere and lasting regard, which he returned in kind. The entire tenor of the correspondence establishes this, no less than the letter which she wrote to him on the death of his young relative, and that other letter in which she intrusted John Aikman's letters to his keeping. Had the hopes of the younger generation been fulfilled, Mrs. Cockburn and Mr. Chalmers would have been connected by the marriages of their children. Anne Pringle was the pledged wife of her cousin, Adam Cockburn, who, however, did not live to redeem his pledge. Anne Pringle's brother, Mark Pringle, married Mr. Chalmers's daughter, Anne Chalmers.

Mr. Chalmers either inherited or acquired some amount of fortune, and settled at Rosehall, near Musselburgh. To this place Mrs. Cockburn's later letters were sent—frequently,

as their superscription purports, by the fishwives who were employed by both families. The letters which are not written to Mr. Chalmers or to his daughter Anne are addressed to Miss Henrietta Cumming, governess for many years in the household of the Earl of Balcarres. Miss Cumming had two brothers—one in the Herald's Office, London; the other assistant to Dr. Roebuck, at Kinniel by Borrowstoness.

Mrs. Cockburn was a particular ally of the Lindsays of Balcarres. She was the bosom friend of Countess Anne of Balcarres, born a Dalrymple [who was, however, ten years Mrs. Cockburn's junior]. There might have been a Scotch cousinship between the two ladies through the Keiths and the Swintons. On the husbands' sides, again, we find Lord Lindsay announcing that "the Laird of Ormiston was chief of a family allied to the Lindsays since the fourteenth century." Lady Anne Barnard, in the account which she gives of her youth in the Lindsay Papers, mentions Mrs. Cockburn as being frequently domesticated at Balcarres along with the earl and the countess; Lady Dalrymple,

the grandmother; the eleven children of the Lindsays; three maiden cousins; another old friend; a tutor and a governess. Lady Anne describes Mrs. Cockburn as having had "goodness, genius, utopianism, and a decided partiality for making matches; for which reason she was the *confidante* of all love-sick hearts." The match-making propensity peeps out decidedly in Mrs. Cockburn's letters. The interest in love-stories and weddings seems to have survived in her kind heart to the last. One or two published letters, written on the occasion of the death of Earl James of Balcarres, and given by Lord Lindsay among the Lindsay Papers, show the terms on which Mrs. Cockburn stood with the family, and illustrate signally her shrewdness, tenderness, and complacency, as well as indicate some of her religious views:—

"I am greatly relieved, for I am not so sanguine as other people to imagine a recovery in old age, after all symptoms of death; and I was pleased with Mary Baird's idea. I told her there was some hope last week; she thought a little, then said, 'Well, I'm sorry for it; for



it will be all to do over again—all the grief to them and pain to him; and how long can it last?’ I thank you for taking me into the room and letting me see the venerable scene. Your letter found me in bed this morning, and I shed tears—a dew Heaven has denied me for real heart-aches, but they come from approbation—it was indeed gratitude to Heaven for taking away my patriarch without a pang. I have kissed his cold cheek—I see him! He liked me, and I truly respected and admired him. I am happy at his tranquil death; he was a man that, ‘take him all in all, we shall not see his like again;’ yet Colin is wonderfully like him! They [Colin and Robert] drank tea with me yesterday. Do ye know, they are better companions to me than your Sir This or Mr. That! I carried in your letter to Lady Dumfries; she showed me hers from Lady Margaret. Jeanie read out your letter, and, when you imputed the easy passage to temperance, Lady Dumfries’ eyes ran over, and she found a lump in her throat. How hard it is to be yoked to one whom you hope to part from eternally! She



feels it. The news has thinned the play-house to-night; the Dalziel family were going and did not. Every proper respect is paid to the remains of our patriarch; and brutified as Dumfries is, there was a ball he and his family were asked to—‘Na, na!’ says he, ‘Mrs. Janet; we will see what comes of our uncle Balcarres first. If we do not respect the dead, we will never be respected by the living.’ Jennie Duff told me this, and said he ought never to have spoke again.

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“Much have you to see, much to observe, for you are born with a mind—which is not so common as we vulgarly imagine—and, alas! much have you to feel. Look on it early as a nursery where you are to be whipped into good order and a perfect acquiescence with the Divine will. The Almighty Maker of souls has various methods of restoring them to the Divine image; it is impossible His power can fail; it is impossible for His image to be eternally obliterated; it is impossible that misery, sin, and discord can be eternal! Look, then, on the erring sons of men as on wretched prisoners, bound in

fetters for a time; but recollect that they are and must be eternal as well as you, and that in the endless ages of eternity they will be restored to order.

\* \* \* \* \*

“See that you give your mother some castor in wine when she goes to bed; it saved my brain once after long fatigue—half a tea-spoonful mixed with her little finger in white wine will compose her beyond what ye can imagine—see it done. Yes! I will come over. I am not now the most cheerful companion, but assure your mother I am a friend. She is directly a widow at the same year of her life I was left one.”

Miss Cumming figures largely in Lady Anne's easy sketches, while it is sufficiently plain that there had been no love lost between the governess and Lady Anne, her eldest pupil. But it is to the credit of Miss Cumming that, if she did not leave a favourable impression on Lady Anne's mind, she could inspire so fair a judge as Mrs. Cockburn with an excellent opinion of Henrietta Cumming's intellect, and a cordial faith in her heart.

Among the old papers which have been recovered, there is a hurried letter written by Henrietta Cumming to her brother James, from Mrs. Cockburn's house. James was established with Dr. Roebuck at Kinniel, and the letter is in reference to an enemy's report of him, which he and his friends feared might have been conveyed to Dr. Roebuck. The letter is full of sisterly affection, anxiety for the brother's honour, and gratitude to Mrs. Cockburn, who had espoused James Cumming's cause to the extent of adding a portion to the letter in order to condole with and reassure him. Mrs. Cockburn proposed to interest a friend of Dr. Roebuck's on the aspersed man's behalf, and offered to accompany his sister to Kinniel in order to see James and his wife in the painful circumstances. The back of the letter is endorsed, evidently in the receiver's hand, with the words, "From Henny and Mrs. Cockburn," as if he had valued and preserved what had been a comfort to him in trouble.

Lord Lindsay, in his *Lives of the Lindsays*, quotes another letter of Henrietta Cumming's, written to her brother Alexander, in the *Heralds'*

Office, begging him to contrive a kinship between her and him and some great North-country Cummings. She had asserted to visitors of the Balcarres family that there was such a relationship, and it would be awkward for her if she could not establish her assertion. Might not this letter be the carrying out of an unwarrantable joke, on which Lord Lindsay comments with due severity, or, at the worst, the momentary impulse of escape from a false position incurred by foolish vanity, rather than an act of deliberate imposition?

Miss Cumming married a Dr. Fordyce, a Presbyterian clergyman in London.\*

In excusing herself from fulfilling an engagement which was no longer desirable, Mrs. Cockburn presents us with an old confident version of a woman's estimate of her sex:—

“Mrs. Cockburn is just informed that Mr.

\* Since this book was in the press, another portion of Mrs. Cockburn's letters has, by the kindness of Miss Douglas, Cumin Place, Grange, Edinburgh, been put into the hands of the writers. It is proposed that these fine letters, together with the whole of the letters already received and partly used here, should be published along with the biographical sketch, in a separate volume.

Chalmers is speechless, and as her taste lies more in her ear than her mouth, she hopes the supper is delayed till his articulation is restored, though she owns he has a helpmeet who may make up for all his deficiencies—but what's a woman to a woman? Mrs. Chalmers knows that. Seriously, send me word if the hen hold or no."

Mrs. Cockburn was fond of pet names. Mr. Chalmers was her "Brownny," Miss Cumming her "Sylph," and Anne Chalmers, later in life, her "Sweet Anne Page." The following letter has the first allusion to Henrietta Cumming by the pet name which Mrs. Cockburn bestowed upon her friend :—

"My dear Brownny,—This is a day of trouble to me. I have parted with my Sylph with tears. I went with very red eyes to a supper, and met there the friend of Mrs. Chalmers, Mrs. Russel, who informed me she was very ill,—had been blooded! I believe no good body will either *stay* or *live*."

*The Mistake*, an exploded comedy, is neatly criticised :—

“Mrs. Cockburn returns *The Mistake*, and thanks. It’s said comedy ought to be the picture of common life; in that sense this is certainly a good one, as it’s very like the present world—very busy about doing nothing.”

An exploded trick is denounced:—

“Such a trick upon widows! To put in feathers to make the tea weigh, great was our suspicion (a natural failing of the sex). If you had seen us on our knees about the division!”

A letter to Miss Cumming contains Mrs. Cockburn’s account of her own gay doings, with her friend’s supposed comments:—

“I never, I think, passed a busier time than I have done since we parted. Good weather and universal acquaintance is a most fatiguing affair; but I have little to complain of, since both body and spirit is able for it all. On Saturday we had a most tight hopp at Colonel Harris’s, where your friend Mrs. Cockburn danced like a miss. ‘It’s a wonder to me that woman holds out. She has more levity than any girl of fifteen,—would fain be thought



young, I suppose! and no doubt setting out for a second venture.'

"You are mistaken, madam. I know that woman perfectly well; it's her humour to dance, and it's yours to talk. She will do as she pleases, and allow you the same freedom. And for a husband,—she has too great a regard for the male sex to appropriate any one of them, and too great a regard to truth to pretend to youth. But, for the same reason, she will not affect the infirmities of age; and if her vigour continue, will dance as frankly with her grandson as with any man whatever.

"Never was any creature in such spirit and drollery as Suff Johnston that night, to the great admiration and amusement of an American lady, who rather looked with the eyes of wonder than of approbation."

Suff Johnston was Lord Cockburn's friend, the well-known daughter of the Laird of Hilton. Brought up by her father purposely in a state of nature, she taught herself to read, and was, at her own request, taught by the family butler to write. She proved herself to be a very rough



diamond. If, as Lord Lindsay imagines, she was sister to Sir David Baird's mother, then she was a cousin of Mrs. Cockburn's. According to Lady Anne Lindsay, there was a standing feud at Balcarres between Suff Johnston and Henrietta Cumming, than whom no two human beings could have been more unlike. Mrs. Cockburn, indulgent to both, was either ignorant of the feud or ignored it.

In the same letter as that we have just quoted from, Mrs. Cockburn records her interest in the curious *cause célèbre* of the day :—

“Four times five hours, Mrs. Harriet, did I spend in the Session-house upon the Douglas cause, and heard them speak

‘about it and about it,

And prove a thing till all men doubt it.’

There's nothing else spoke of in town, and though I was keen at first, I am grown tired of it.”

The letter winds up with an appeal for the young woman's confidence, and a reference to her work, which recall the pretty performances of Mary Delany :—

“I think, Henn, I am entitled to all your adventures, and an account of all the works you have made under the sun, of the candlesticks that you have built and the birds you have drawn, of the hearts you have won and of those you have broke, and whether Auntie Cowan was right when she said Hendi Long was to declare himself your slave, with an honourable intention of becoming your master. All these, and much more, with your dreams of the night and your flights of the day, I desire may be faithfully transmitted. These are the works suited to my taste. But whenever you are idler than a summer fly, draw me a bold stroke for a pair of ruffles, only the edge thereof with much show and little work, and I care not though it be fruits or birds instead of flowers,—for why confine to imitate only one of the works?”

Miss Cumming, it should be mentioned, was famous for designing and drawing patterns of ruffles. She also painted on satin, and seems to have ambitiously proposed to paint a gown, and get it presented to Queen Charlotte—if,

indeed, she did not carry out the idea. (Was this in expectation of a pension which Lord Balcarres procured for her, or in return for it?) In one of Miss Cumming's own letters, she commissions her sister-in-law, "Minnie," to procure the material :—

"Pray let the satin be a white free of blue, if painting on satin looks better than on lute-string. Her Majesty's gown will just cost ten pound sterling. It just takes twenty yards for a gown and petticoat. I am willing, for the honour of the thing, and the views it will give me, to spend my means in that way for a year or two, that it may afford me much more after. Colonel Keith takes it in hand to present it properly, and to get me the shape of her Majesty's hoop from her mantua-maker. The shoes shall determine for or against it. Oh, such things as I am doing for my lord, of the bird kind, and of the flower also !"

Miss Cumming supplies another glimpse into these mysteries of the old work-tables :—

"Lady Bal begs you would tell her what kind

of bones is fit to make the everlasting white for painting gauze, as she is determined that her young ladies shall wear no other lappets but of their own painting with the painted suit. She proposes to have the bones gathered for you here, that you may have the less trouble in making it."

Henrietta Cumming had a love of legitimate art. She spurs on her brother and sister-in-law to improve their acquaintance with Runciman ("Runchiman" she spells it):—

"Runchiman's letter is worth the while. Pray you write to him, and lose not an opportunity of getting an account of all the curious original paintings abroad. An account from one whose skill is so much to be depended on is much worth. I return you the letter, Jamie, which is more than you ever do to me."

In a summer and an autumn of 176—, Mrs. Cockburn announces to her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers, an expedition to the Highlands, and a visit to "the faded Forest." On this, and on the impressions which she derived from the

changes of scene, she enlarges to Henrietta Cumming, who had just enjoyed a similar experience :—

“Your Highland expedition entertained me as much as St. Pierre’s visit to the mountains of Switzerland. I’m not sure whether you or Rousseau writes best. Were I to return adventure for adventure, I’m not sure but I would equal you (not in description of places, though some have been noble, but modern); but the variety of people and characters I have seen and lived among for six months past afforded me agreeable observations. The works of God have all some affinity, and sure taste is, and always must be, the same, for Truth is one. I join with you in adoring nature. There are some noble minds, like your mountains, that the heat cannot melt, nor the rains dissolve—fixt they stand in all weathers, and though rough perhaps to appearance, are indeed friends most permanent and unshaken; others, smooth and even like fine verdant meads that tempt the traveller to try, prove nought but faithless bogs, and slump you go every step. I have

seen characters of all climates and all weathers, and admire the diversity.”

The next pictures are from Fairnalee :—

“The moon was eclipsed three or four hours ago. As if she rejoiced at getting out again, she shines with redoubled splendour; she shows the embosomed mountains that surround this spot, and the blue stream that runs circular around it. The half-naked oak is seen again in the small pond on whose brink he grows, and the tall shadows look like giants on the smooth-shaven green. Nature is all silent as the grave. Happy the mind that resembles this night—clear, light, and serene—who can behold this midnight scene without feeling what I cannot describe! Good night.”

“The storm has desolated the trees. The ground is strewed with their fallen honours. I don’t talk of the weather because I have nothing to say, but because I sit in a closet that is just in the garden, and shows me the scene. I feel myself greatly resemble those stripped trees—year after year has robbed me of my shelter and my foliage—but this is melancholy.”

To serve as an antidote to melancholy, Mrs. Cockburn notes down in this letter a little country gossip which had diverted her, and called forth an effusion not unworthy of her "Nancy's to the Assembly gane :"—

"Here comes a secret I wrote to a young farmer, a lad very like one in 'The Gentle Shepherd.' He has been severely in love with a country coquette for some years, and she keeps him on till he is become the subject of much vulgar mirth—for few can pity that passion.

"A RECEIPT FOR WOOING.

- "If your lass is coquettish and frisky,  
Make up to her easy and briskly ;  
If she frown on ye, turn on your heel,  
Make love to another, your heart to recover,  
You'll quickly discover she would keep you her lover,  
Tho' her heart be as hard as the steel.
- "She will try all her tricks to entice ye,  
Sometimes sweet, sometimes sour, sometimes spicy ;  
Affect all these humours yourself,  
See that ye vex her, be sure to perplex her,  
Provoke her and coax her, roast her and toast her,  
She's as sure in your pouch as your pelf.
- "If your lassie is modest and shy,  
Watch every cast of her eye ;



If she blushes, she's halfings your own ;  
Approach by degrees, her hand ye may seize,  
And give it a squeeze, then down on your knees,  
And prefer her to kings, or their crown.

"If she answer you no way but flying,  
Depend on't she will be complying,  
So follow as fast as you can.  
But if coolly she stay, I'm afraid she'll say nay,  
With such nymphs it's the way ; then fast as ye may  
Pray pack up your heart and be gone,  
For ye may leave her to some other man."

Whether the "receipt" was tried and found effectual by a couple whose grandchildren would now be old men and women who shall say?

Miss Cumming was a useful as well as an agreeable friend. When she was on a visit to her mother, "first entry above Adam's Buildings, Cowgate," Mrs. Cockburn was out of town. On that occasion Henrietta "arled" a servant in prospect for Mrs. Cockburn, with whom the latter promised to be pleased, "as I generally am with everything within my gates;" visited Jenny Shaw, Mrs. Cockburn's servant in possession, and saw the cat, the predecessor of that which Mrs. Cockburn left in charge to Lady Fairnalee; besides executing commissions liberally

for the ladies of the Forest. "I have not seen Nell Pringle since she got her hood," Mrs. Cockburn remembers to tell Henrietta. "Violy was here, and says she's very well pleased with it and the borders. I would wish for a hood also, and about six yards of narrow borders to go round my double napkin; as it's very large, it need be only an inch broad, but it must be silk." Occasionally Henrietta herself was the modiste, and gave immense satisfaction. "Beautyfull and delectable," Mrs. Cockburn addresses her correspondent, enchanted by an effort of genius. "I came from my chamber, and found Tib Hall gazing with the eye of an artist upon my lovely cloak. 'I wager,' says she, 'Henny Cumming contrived that cloak.' See how artists know others' hands at first sight! Nothing ever was more admired. I visited them yesterday on purpose to show them my cloak."

Mrs. Cockburn took a lively interest in David Hume's quarrel with Rousseau, who suffered, in her opinion, in consequence of his accusation against his friend David. She had an old kindness for the cynic, and she

could not change it into ill-will because of her religion. She chaffed him not very reverently for it was not a reverent generation on his opinions, but her chaffing had at least the merit of honesty and good-nature, and was probably as effectual as more solemn and more bitter remonstrances. With her usual quickness, she makes use of nature on her side of the argument in a published letter to him :—

“I am just returned from a Highland expedition, and was much delighted with the magnificence of nature in her awful simplicity. These mountains, and torrents, and rocks would almost convince one that it was some Being of infinite power that had created them. Plain corn countries look as if men had made them ; but I defy all mankind put together to make anything like the Pass of Killiecranky. Were you ever in the Highlands?”

The friendship did not last so long without being tested ; witness the fire, and yet the gentleness, with which Mrs. Cockburn refers to a misunderstanding on a very delicate subject—

that of her son's interest—which had arisen between her and David Hume :—

“In the meantime, I am as jealous as he (Rousseau) that anybody should pay for my bills. At the same time, sir, I never paid any man a higher compliment than I did you by being truly angry at you. Infidel as you are (and little, indeed, do I expect from any such), I marked you down as a man whom God had chosen to show his power upon, and that He had compelled you to act as a Christian in spite of your contradiction. To set an opportunity of serving me I own astonished me; and I had all the anger a friend ought to have. I have not been at courts. My heart is yet simple, though I have lived amongst men. I said to myself, Had David's son been in my power—I felt what I would have done. I had no indolence, no prudence, and I am apt to suppose my friends of the same make with myself; that is an error, however, I daily mend of, and by-and-by I shall be as much wrapped up in my own shell as I see all the reptiles around me are. Your answer, however, satisfies me; and I still

believe (because it pleases me to believe) that you would have served me had it been in your power. I have sent my son your letter."

Mrs. Cockburn takes David Hume's part against Rousseau, while, however, she is tender to the Frenchman. "Rousseau has a pen that can wound to the bottom of the heart," she tells Henrietta Cumming. "His common character is that cursed, suspicious, querulous temper. David Hume was warned of it, but his affection ran away with him, and I am sorry for his disappointment. In his (Rousseau's) long letter, he accused David Hume of the meanest things, which he is incapable of, such as opening his (Rousseau's) letters. It's my firm opinion the poor man is mad; suspicion is a never-failing attendant on that disorder. Great genius, with strong feelings, is too apt to crack the machine, and I sincerely pity him. I would not have David answer him in public, and yet I fear he will be obliged to do it. I am truly glad to get David home again; he's a very old friend, and I've long had a habit of liking him and being diverted with him."

On another occasion Mrs. Cockburn writes:—

“I have begged Mr. Hume to put in the *Edinburgh Courant* a very humorous paper he got in the *London Daily Advertiser*, upon him and Rousseau. It's the best thing yet published; mind to look for it.”

Eight or nine years afterwards, David Hume's visit to Edinburgh and to Mrs. Cockburn, and the temper he was in then, are thus laughingly chronicled in a letter to Mr. Chalmers:—

“David Hume has been here, and is neither pleased with my voice, my manners, nor my diction; so what shall be done? However, Mrs. Mure shall carry me, such as I am, on Saturday to ——; and I am morally certain I will be vastly agreeable, because I am positively certain I love my company.” Here follows a most off-hand invitation:—“Do ye always go out at night? If not, I am at home to-night. Hot chickens and Willie Swinton.”

We have a description of a ball at Mrs. Cockburn's own house in her blithest strain:—

“On Wednesday I gave a ball. How do ye



think I contrived to stretch out this house to hold twenty-two people, and had nine couple always dancing? Yet this is true; it is also true that we had a table covered with divers eatables all the time, and that everybody eat when they were hungry and drank when they were dry, but nobody ever sat down. I think my house, like my purse, is just the widow's cruse. I must tell you my party of dancers: Captain Bob Dalrymple was king of the ball, as it was his bespeaking (tell Lady Bal that, as a nephew, she will take delight in him; he is my first favourite). Well, for men, there was Bob and Hew, young men both; Peter Inglis; a Mr. Bruce, a lawyer; then Jock Swinton and Jock Turnbull. Then, for women, there were Tibbie Hall, my two nieces, (Miss Rutherfords—Nanny and Peggie,) Agnes Keith, Christy Pringle, Babie Carnegie, Christy Anderson, Jeannie Rutherford. Mrs. Mure and Violy Pringle came and danced a reel, and went off. Now for our dance. Our fiddler sat where the cupboard is, and they danced in both rooms; the table was stuffed into the window, and we



had plenty of room. It made the bairns all vastly happy."

An assembly is the sequel :—

"Next day I went to the assembly with all these misses. Never was so handsome an assembly. There were seven sets—one all quality ladies, and all handsome; one called the maiden set, for they admitted no married women; one called the heartsome set, which was led off by Lady Christian Erskine, in which danced Mrs. Horn, Suff Johnston, Anne Keith; Bess St. Clair and Lady Dunmore humbly begged to be admitted to stand at the foot, which was granted. Suff was my bedfellow all night, and is just gone."

At another ball the musical Earl of Kelly appears under a characteristic cloud :—

"Kelly was at our Monday's ball, quite melancholy with the death of 'Bouch,' the celebrated musician."

The following incidental indications of the motherly, affectionate heart of the leader of society are only specimens taken at random from her letters :—

“Since Wednesday I have been in no small anxiety, and anxiety now does not agree with my health—it always makes my heart and lungs too big for my breast. Our dear little missie (her grand-niece Anne) has been in a fever. There’s an ugly slow fever going about the country, and she has had it; but I hope it is abating. She sleeps in the room next me, and sleeps well; her pulse is calmer to-day, and I would fain hope the worst is over.”

“To imagine myself anyhow conducive to the happiness of a worthy pair of young people gives my heart such a rebound as convinces me I have not entirely lost my Maker’s image, but retain the appetite of diffusing blessings and being blest by doing so.”

“Mrs. Cockburn’s best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers. She is much obliged to them for the offer of a party so agreeable to her taste, but finds her neighbours so distressed that she cannot think of going abroad to-night. She hopes the danger is heightened by a mother’s fears; but there is real danger too.”

“Will you write me how she (Mrs. Chalmers)

is? For, to say truth, I love the wife, and can ill spare a cheerful companion. I think there's very few left that can be merry, and though I'm not merry, I like to see it."

"You saw me just out of a sick bed. I am now just come from a wedding that has neither tochers, jointures, nor wheeled carriages, yet made six people very happy; viz., the couple themselves, their two fathers, and their two mothers, not forgetting some sisters and brothers, who love *love* better than riches—a very uncommon case."

"Dear Sir,—The accounts of your family somewhat transcends a polite card. I have heard by my good neighbour below-stairs that sweet little Kate is recovered—thank God. I this day heard Mrs. Chalmers has been ill of a rash fever, but better—thank God again. I will tell you once for all, if any of you are so impertinent as to die, it will vex, anger, and disoblige your old friend,—A. COCKBURN.

"Write to me, as ye shall not see my face in my house till I have a rope ready for you."

Here is an object of benevolence, with her claims judiciously set forth by Mrs. Cockburn:—

“There’s a woman I must beg your interest for, and, as times go, she is entitled to your warmest friendship, being your *creditor*, a relation that in the mode of the present season not only begets compassion, but the warmest friendship and generosity. Now, setting the title aside, I do think Mrs. Chalmers’s late grocer, in the Candlemaker Row, well entitled to £5 out of the exchequer. She has brought up by her own industry thirteen children, and educated them all to business; and she has not a shilling in the world. She feels it very sore to depend for bread on the labours of her daughters, whom she was used to feed; and I believe we would all feel it as well as her, though she says they are very dutiful. They are mantua-makers, and she gave them a London education. I have employed her these three years, and always found her an honest, clever, discreet woman.”

Will the present day afford so hearty a recommendation as this?—

“Henry Duff, of the Chesterfield, is my friend Mr. Duff’s son, brother to Lady Dumfries—the finest fellow ever was born.”

Or a more valuable testimony to a friend?—

“Oh, Hena! a true friend is a rare thing—if ever there was one Lady Bal is, for absence never puts one out of her pow; and, besides, she can be constant, even though conscious of many faults—that is an admirable quality.”

An old county election was making much stir in Mrs. Cockburn’s world. Henrietta Cumming, in the country, sends her version of the affair to her brother and his wife; and Mrs. Cockburn, at the ear of the Court of Session, records the price paid by the unfortunate candidate.

Henrietta Cumming writes:—

“Alas! alas! I have no hopes of their (the family of Mr. Alexander, the loser) affairs on this side of the water—nothing goes right with them. The devil is in Lady Anstruther I believe.” [Jenny Faa, beautiful and witty, was of gypsy descent, being one of the great

merchant Faas of Dunbar, as well as wife of the winner, Sir John Anstruther of Elie, who had his wife's extraction cast in his teeth on the hustings.] "She has so prejudiced the Sheriff of Fife in her favour that there is actually the most evident partiality used that ever was known in any court: everything is given against them and for her. Mr. William Alexander brought a party of Highlanders here, which he said was in his own defence. I fear it was more rash than prudent. They bragged they would soon set them off. Accordingly, the court sat upon these men, and it was proved that arms was seen on them, which was against the laws of elections, and they were all turned off save six—I know not for what they remain. I often take my ride to Pittenweem, and sometimes call on Mrs. Alexander."

Mrs. Cockburn writes :—

"Our friend Alexander, my Sylph, is really unlucky in everything. His brother's bribery has been so open it was impossible to pass it—not but everybody is conscious there is as



much on the other side; but the law is express, and he pays costs, &c., which I truly grudge—all the judges did the same, and even Durham thinks the Bench swayed mightily to the landed interest. It's said both parties are cast, and it will be a poll election—more expense and trouble. The very papers and proofs in this case printing costs £500. How many poor would that have fed! Lord Ale-moor has never been out of his house into the air yet; he cannot walk a step, but in good health and spirits otherwise. The Bench were unanimous, all except Balfour and Auchinleck."

Here is a single sentence which ought to be written on brass, and studied by all critics who prefer to exercise their trade in depreciation rather than approbation:—

"A genuine painter ever abhors false lights and caricature figures; a musical ear sickens at discordant sounds; a moral ear abhors depreciating."

Highly-valued volumes of Swift, Goldsmith, and Burke are referred to at various times, but



there are others whose titles sound strange to modern readers, as those in the following sentences :—

“Thanks for ‘The Pious Fool.’

“Indeed, my Benevolent, I never said I had sent ‘John Bunckle;’ it was ‘Lucy Granville’ I returned . . . although here comes John ! Peace to the souls that read him ! He surpasses my patience ; but Suff Johnstone wishes there were twenty volumes of him. How our sex love you marrying sort of men !”

“I endeavoured to get ‘Donna Maria’ for you, but she is not to be had.”

Mrs. Cockburn was a voracious reader, with a frankly-avowed preference for fiction.

There are two rhapsodies written in a New Year’s week, the one addressed to the Brownie, the other to the Sylph, followed by more prosaic, but equally cordial greetings :—

“Peace be with him (whoever he be) that causeth the widow’s hand to work with ease, who maketh her paper and wax to abound ! His fame shall be as wide as words made of ink

can make it; it shall not depend upon words made of air, that may be frozen or zephyred away as Boreas or Zephurnia pleases. Lasting as paper, black as ink, immortal as poets can render it, be the fame of the Giver of the gifts of kings.

“Hereby underwritten we return our commands for the benefit of our benefactor. ‘Sir, I command your Majesty to give our beloved ——— whatever place he chooses to fill, well knowing he will ask none but what he will fill with honour, and for your honour and service. This written with our hand the seventh day of January, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-seventh year of our Lord.

“(Signed)                      “DIGNIARI.”

“Sun that ariseth on a New Year, granted once more to the mortal race of man, arise propitious! Let thy rays cheer the heart and fortify the nerves of my little Sylph! Warm and benign like thine are the emanations of her soul. Luminous and true as thy light are the images of her fancy. Deep as thy shadows at

eve and dark is her memory of times that are past—but thy mid-day beam drives the phantoms afar off, and she shines in the lustre of true benevolence. She shall live, O sun! when thy influence is no more. When the firmament in which thou presided shall be as a parchment roll—when the elements shall cease, and all inanimate matter shall return to its original nothing, she shall live and rejoice in her course, every moment arising nearer to Infinite perfection, perfectly restored to the likeness of that Original of whom and for whom she was.

“Come, rosy health, and deck the cheek ;  
Come, gentle Peace, of spirit meek ;  
Come, every fancy, new shapes taking,  
Make gay the scene, asleep or waking.  
Come, Melody, on soft air fleeting,  
Attend my Sylph with gentle greeting ;  
And far be household care and strife,  
And hopeless love, the bane of life ;  
All jealous fears, all heartfelt sorrow,  
All anxious cares about to-morrow.

“Little Sylph, that walks unseen  
On the ice-besprinkled green,  
Of mind elate, of stature small,  
Though small yet great, though short yet tall,

Send to heaven thy matin song,  
Softly sweet the notes prolong;  
And beg thy friend from toils may cease,  
And close this year her eyes in peace.

“There, then, Miss Melpomene has thought fit to go to bed for an afternoon nap, and she will not give me another line, so you must even take prose for the rest. . . . Make for me the compliments of the season to all, especially the patriarch. May he live a thousand years, and more! Blessing to all the bairns and mothers; long may they dance together! I hope Lady Dalrymple will dance at Lady Anne’s wedding. . . . Our Anne is boarded at Mrs. Hamilton’s, and begun the music—she has an excellent ear. Have you got the songs of Selma yet? If not, let me know, and I will send it, to your New Year’s Gift. Adieu, my dear Henefie.

“Fourth day of the year ’60.”

Then there is a sample of first-footing:—

“Thanks to the best of all Brownys. Is any mortal as favoured as me, blest with a Sylph and a Brownie? To have these best of all beings restored to the world and to the faith is

a blessing given me alone; not to only that, but serenades are restored. At three this morning a very pretty gentleman was at my bedside, whilst the rest of the starved lovers sang and played at the window

‘She rose and let me in.’

I will wait on you to-morrow. I intended a chair visit to Mrs. Chalmers to-night, but I think I’ll no fash her and myself; besides, she would tempt me to bestow tenpennyworth of time upon her. Adieu, *ma chère* Browni.”

Accident has thus preserved a love affair of Ambassador Keith’s, with the very conflicting feelings which it excited in his friends:—

“Now for news. It is believed by everybody but Mrs. Baird that Ambassador Keith is to be married immediately to Mally Cheape; he is certainly with her every forenoon, dressed like a goddess, his equipage waiting, and a perfect bareface about it. I think Anne is staggered, and believes, as the devils do; it will disturb a fine society, and I am really vexed about it. I fear it is true.”

Mrs. Cockburn did not allow her Brown's amiable facility in conferring favours to rust for want of being called forth. She could the more freely and fully credit him with the quality because she herself possessed it in no stinted measure. Without a moment's hesitation she employed him like a true friend whenever he could be of use to her—from procuring lint to be spun and woven “for Adam's sarks,” to sending up herrings from Musselburgh. In the matter of replenishing her cellar, where the benefit of a gentleman's experience was a special boon to a lady, what he did not do at his own hand she required of him without fail. She drew long bills on his good-nature for her friends, whether the demand were brandy, “which is Fairnalee's sole beverage,” or Geneva, which Mrs. Cockburn, in her character of a doctor, had prescribed for a sick lady. In the perfect simplicity and firmness of their old-world friendship, she “bids” his guests and bespeaks his escort with a certain manly *bon-homie*:—

“Mrs. Cockburn's best compliments to her

Brownny, begs he will forgive her for substituting her Fairy instead of Miss Baird, who has so many objections, maternal, virginal, and prudential, which a fairy cannot have, being not made of dust and clay, and knows not man from woman, nor water from wine, yet is a perfect elfe, and will warble at a moment's warning, and make the air mellifluous. As she's like to grow immortal before I think fit, I wish to hold her up, and have taken upon me to ask her in my own name as your guest. Will you forgive this intrusion of the genii, and pardon the possessor of the Brownny?"

"*Ma chère* Brownny,—I wish you would add to your list my gallant nabob Swinton and my comrade Bess St. Clair—if ye do I will forgive your negligence last autumn about the lint spinning. Monsieur Morpheus, or Somnus, took full possession of my person this morning. Of all my foes he is the favourite; you are next to him."

"Our Brownny,—Will you meet your comrade Wallace and me at the door of the concert?"



She cannot get a ticket, so must go in without one, and you must take care of her, and come home with me at night. Speak to us, and we shall see all about it. If ye can send a ticket, do. She is here. I have fine trout for night."

In nothing is Mrs. Cockburn racier than in her invitations and refusals of invitations.

"It is desired that Sir Alexander (Dick?) and Adam fix Friday for a taste of my cruse, with Mrs. Chalmers and you, at dinner or supper, as you will, or both. I like both best, but will have one, and I am very positive in my temper."

"Hope long delayed is sickness to the soul. If Solomon did not say this he ought to have said it. What Mrs. Cockburn says to Mr. Chalmers is that to-morrow night he shall be happy with his charmer Sophia. If he pleases he shall have a still greater happiness, for he will add much by coming to that of his friend and servant,—A. COCKBURN."

"Wednesday night,—If I could lye I would

date this Thursday; but as I really lye very long, it is Thursday night I want you."

"Mrs. Cockburn's compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers—would wait on them with a great deal of pleasure, but finds herself at a loss, as Mrs. Chalmers sets her an example of never coming from home, and as there is nobody she admires more, she wishes to imitate her in everything. . . .

"Can you tell me any reason for my not being to see Mrs. Chalmers when I have been these three or four days mistress of myself? None, except that *reason* has nothing to do with man or woman (!) but to reproach; yet I feel a certain inclination to impute this to a better cause, viz., self-denial, which we all know is a Christian virtue. I really am as well entertained with Mrs. Chalmers as with the novels I eternally read—but they come to me."

The following letter refers to the miniature of Mrs. Cockburn painted by Anne Forbes, who had been able to go to Rome to study there

under the guidance of her kinsman and brother artist, the elder Aikman :—

“ Mrs. Cockburn’s compliments to Mr. Chalmers—as she coughed all night she found herself so ill-faired she could not appear before the artists. She would always choose to be in the best light before Mr. Chalmers, especially when kept for posterity; however, as there is one person who really would be fond of the effigy after the original is returned to dust, she wishes to be seen by the lovely painters. The journey to North Berwick is put off till Thursday. Can Mr. Chalmers contrive a meeting? Would to-morrow at six o’clock do?”

In 1767 Mr. Chalmers lost a near relation by an early death. Mrs. Cockburn, who was then at Fairnalee, in a letter of a very different tenor from the notes “light as air” which she was in the habit of writing to her Brownie, hastened to express her fellow-feeling with her friends :—

“ This moment, dear sir, I am informed of the heavy stroke you and Mrs. Chalmers have met with. I am not informed how, but that is no

matter. I thank God I can shed tears for the sorrows of others, though I cannot for my own. I should not say so, for to me it is a real grief to lose a youth of such promising hopes, uncommonly blest by nature and by fortune. I have wept for him. I do feel for Mrs. Chalmers—from my heart I feel. Was he too good, do you think, to be left to corrupt in this dissipated world? Is it a favour of Heaven to him, and a chastisement to us? I hope so; I believe so. He is gone uncontaminated to the God who made him: he had beauty, parts, and fortune enough to have made him fearfully corrupted. How happy is it for him that he is called home early, before his spirit was sullied by the contagion of the world! I write you my quickest apprehensions of comfort; there is, indeed, no other consolation. I heartily pity his sisters! Alas! how can trash compensate for the loss of a friend and a brother? While I write to you in the fulness of my heart the tear blinds me—one cannot see youth in its highest glory laid in the dust without a tear; but it is a tear of approbation, for he was a

youth of most promising hopes. My best respects to his grandmother and aunt. I do not wish them not to feel, but I hope Heaven will support them under so heavy a stroke. I am, dear Mr. Chalmers, your sincere friend and servant,—A. COCKBURN.”

Mrs. Cockburn volunteers a very honest and decided opinion on the Wilkes tumults :—

“God pity the King and mend the people ! which nothing will do but a plague, a famine, or a foreign war—and well licket ; no fears but they get it ; well do they deserve it. There will be no civil war because there is no real grievance, and, besides, there is neither a head nor a heart to begin it. There is not a spunk of enthusiasm of any kind left, and without that, mankind are mere eating and drinking machines, and can do neither good nor ill. See whether Prophet David or I prophesy truest.

“I’m of Junius’s opinion about Wilkes : they have made a mountain out of a midge.”

There is testimony borne to a more soothing

strain, which might have had old associations :—

“Of all the sounds I ever heard—and my soul has soared to heaven before now—of all the sounds I ever heard, Colonel Reed’s flute—well, it is amazing the powers of it; it thrills to your very heart. He plays in any taste you please, and composes what he plays. You know my taste is the *penseroso*, and so it is his. He played me five acts of a tragedy that went to my heart, and I spoke in to myself all the words of it. I would not let him speak the epilogue. You must hear him, Sylph. O how I regretted your absence to-night! but here is a letter will bring harmony enough to you. My niece Clerk was so good as entertain me with Colonel Reed to-night. He is a gentle, melancholy, tall, well-bred, lean man; and for his flute, it speaks all languages; but those sounds that come from the heart to the heart—I never could have conceived it; it had a dying fall—I was afraid I could not bear it when I heard it perfectly. I can think of nothing but that flute, so good night, good Sylph.



“Love to the good man of the law and his good woman.”

A matron's troubles, whether for her own troop of maidens, or (more disinterestedly) for the troops of her neighbours, seem to have been the same in all generations. It is probable that Valeria and Cornelia were mortally perplexed how to get their “young people” properly marshalled for the gladiators' shows.

“I think, my Brownny, that I was bereft of all understanding to-day, and that all my senses descended to my heels, for I had a mind to have spoke to Mrs. Mure, that she and I should ask Mr. Keith as a guest on Tuesday, in the place of Lady Balcarres, to matronise and patronise his damsels and nieces. It will cost you but a walk to Hermytage with the proper dispatch, and you go as ambassador from us all to ask the honour of his company. I'm sure you will approve of this thought, and execute it properly. Tell Mrs. Chalmers if I were not a dissipated fellow like her gudeman I would have seen her. Adieu, Browni.



“Saturday, twelve at night.

“Is it not possible to get Tib Hall as a matron? See about that.”

“Dear Brownny,—I find Adam so ill colded he actually cannot venture out to-morrow, otherwise we would lose him on Tuesday. I foresee a famine of men, so get a supply. I also fear friend George is laid aside. Pray why is not Captain Mure with us? He’s a hearty cock. There should be some lads for the misses, too. There’s young Innergelly and Bangour, ready for all manner of sports. Anne Wauchope is to go with me and Culdares. Peter Murray is our gallant. Get men, my Brownny—with all your getting, get men.”

Mrs. Cockburn could pay pretty compliments, especially when her heart was softened by the prospect of absence. “The seas” which she was to cross, however, were, so far as her biographers can learn, no greater than that frith which rolled between the Loudons and Fife, between Castle Hill and Balcarres.

“Mrs. Cockburn presents her grateful acknow-

ledgments to Mr. Chalmers for all his favours. She has made it her boast that he is of all her lovers the best and greatest. No proof of love so agreeable as an attention to the taste and fancies of a female, even in trifles. It is no diminution to her vanity that she is only a sharer of universal good-will. She feels the warmth of the sun, tho' he shines on thousands. And now, sir, having wrote a very pretty card, will ye give my service to the gudewife, and blessing to miss? I shall soon cross the seas, and must take this way of bidding you a hearty farewell."

Here is a coquettish enigma :—

"Mrs. Cockburn hears that Mr. Chalmers is ill, and is sorry because—let him find out the because. She is not well neither, and that's a pity too—tho' she never is very sorry for herself—and yet she has great cause. She salutes the cheerful—find out who that is!—and she kisses the innocents."

"It was like Mrs. Cockburn not to know

that she was ill," one is inclined to say, in anticipation of the next of these letters.

"Alas! your spouse and me never met. The very day after your Miss Anne did me the pleasure to drink tea with me, Halbert Duff, who wanted to carry me west with him, found out I was in a fever. I had not the sense to find it out for myself, as I had been ill above a month, and much deprest in spirit. I took it to be the state of age approaching, and was setting my mind to receive its cold approaches. However, a fever commenced, with all the applications of bleeding and blistering; and I suppose it was worse than I apprehended, because Doctor Rutherford came always thrice a day. It confined me three weeks, and left me a very skeleton. I am still weak, and eat far too little, but am come out to fresh air, old friendship, perfect ease, regular hours, and good milk, in my friend's house, Ravelston. I came here on Tuesday, and began to recruit on the road. I exchanged a bow with your spouse, who was in a chaise."

As a convincing proof that she was recruit-

ing, she forthwith indulges in a vigorous diatribe against women remaining single, and smartly suggests a cure; while she philosophises on the folly of the evil in a spirit that ought to delight the heart of *Punch*, or of a true Saturday Reviewer:—

“I must find fault with all my countrywomen, who pay so bad a compliment to my favourite sex that none of them chooses the sacred hymeneal tie that can live independent of it. It's really very strange. I'm clear for burning Sir Charles Grandison by the hands of the hangman. The girls are all set agog seeking an ideal man, and will have none of God's corrupted creatures. I wonder why they wish for perfection; for my share I would none on't—it would ruin all my virtues and all my love. Where would be the pleasure of mutual forbearance, of mutual forgiveness? Even as a good housewife, I would choose my lord and master should have many faults, because there's so much glory in mending them. One is prouder of darning an old table-cloth than of sewing a new one.”

Having sympathised with the gaieties and with the parliamentary news of Mr. Chalmers, who was in London; asked if he had heard of Lady Balcarres' adventures at the masquerade, as Mrs. Cockburn feared that "our Haining" (Alemoor?) would pay for his gambols; questioned the particulars of Colonel Stewart's India Bill; and forwarded a message to Mrs. Strange (the great engraver's wife), with much more, no wonder that Mrs. Cockburn should conclude thus:—

"I must go walk. I have disobeyed orders by writing so long a letter. They say I waste myself with writing, but I deny it, for I think less when I write than any other time."

Mrs. Cockburn did *not* waste herself with writing, so far as posterity can see. The succeeding letter has the same untranslatable mixture of high spirit and unselfish light-heartedness:—

"Heaven's best guardians attend my dear Brownie. I am not very well, not very ill. If you can cure two-score and seventeen you may

do so, but I am indifferent; and sincerely rejoice that the wife of my Brownny's bosom is preserved to him, and to me, and to all who love and value—I won't say what. You ask my commands. I order you bid Peggy Crawford court Adam Cockburn. I am far from certain that she would succeed, but it will be very honourable, and he will refuse her genteelly, or take her kindly and truly, sans jointures and all the et-cæteras of the present times. If you find time, a letter will really be a regale to

“Your friend, A. C.

“I am going to live.”

“1772

1713

Substract,”

at the end of one of the letters, is supposed to point to her age.

Here is one of her quips, the play on the mere letter of scriptural words being so comically pat, that the liberty may be forgiven, even by those who object most strongly to “clerical jokes :”—

“Mrs. Cockburn presents her best respects

to Mrs. Chalmers, and demands an account of her spouse; hopes he is not killed by the multitude that he feeds—his hospitality will be his death; but then he cannot live without it, so it's all one. If the black silk glove hath appeared, let it be sent; and let me know how my open-hearted friend in the scarf does.

“It's the right hand; and the left never knows what it does.”

As a well-bred, thrifty dame, Mrs. Cockburn enjoins economy, and makes no bones in giving the advice:—

“That fellow Kennedy, if he cast up to-morrow, he will save you a groat, and I hope we will all learn to save groats. I hate all expense, and hope to see people set their faces to saving, as I do. I wish you would begin to set the example.”

The next letter contains one of the first hints—pathetic in its simple brevity—of the deep trouble which for eight years and more must have haunted and hung over this merry soul that bravely bore its own burden, and strove that the shadow should not darken other lives.



“It makes you happy to make others so. Here is the comedy which has been a blessing for amusement to me and mine on this cold, anxious night. I would fly from anxiety if I could, but it pursues me, and has done for twenty years. If Adam would give over coughing, I think I would be happy; but something else would come. Let us take what we get patiently: fretting is to no purpose. I think it is an excellent comedy. \* \* \*

“Your woman, A. COCKBURN.”

We have a good explanation of a good present:—

“Say what you please, no storm nor frost can cool your heart. You send a good heart-heater to me, troth, and never a word about it. I fancy it's so good you could not sleep in the house with it. If the snow pause, I am to —— to-morrow. Send me one herring. Love to the wife; she's worth ten Mallys and Nancys, and so am I.

“As witness my hand, A. COCKBURN.

“I will have two herring, now I think on't.”

She attends the Peers Assembly.

“I saw none but the sick and afflicted, till I at once broke out like a star in the Peers Assembly, when I walked in by myself at nine o’clock, and was so surrounded by men that I saw no women till near ten, and then was as much rejoiced over by the women. I could not tell to what sex I belonged that night, for till ten o’clock I had more men following me than women; and the women for that reason followed me too, though some I do think for my own sake, particularly Tibb Hall and Mary Pringle.

“‘A vast exhibition of vanity,’ say you, ‘in this old lady.’ Very true, reverend sir; and I shall be vain while I live of the attention and good-will of all my compatriots—ay, and try to keep it up as long as I live; for there is nothing so pleasant and wholesome to the human heart as to love and be loved.”

Perhaps no letter in the whole packet afforded such perfect pleasure as that which is scrolled over with copies of the address, “Miss Anne

Chalmers," in pencilled characters half an inch in length, and with a quaint tree, carrying quainter birds—the abiding handiwork of warm, rosy little fingers, that in their turn grew stiff and feeble, and for half a century have been mouldering into dust.

"Mrs. Cockburn's affectionate compliments to Miss Anne Chalmers. She sends her, as she desired, a pock of stuff for her babie; which, with her neatness and industry, she will find contains every kind of garment-stuff for a quilted coat, stockings, lace for caps, and fur for a cloak. Sorry she has nothing finer for Doll's sake, but prefers neatness in dress to finery, both in babies and ladies. She desires Miss Anne will present her kind service to her mother and Miss Katie."

The judge, Lord Alemoor (Andrew Pringle of Haining, uncle of her grand-nephew and niece, Mark and Anne Pringle of Crichton, was an old connection of Mrs. Cockburn's, and a friend for whom she had great respect and regard. An expedition in the old style, with Mr. and Mrs.

Chalmers, to Lord Alemoor's house of Hawkhill is thus recorded :—

“Dear Mr. Chalmers,—Can you take me down to Hawkhill between you to-day? If you can, send the chaise for me any hour you please, because I am not keen of walking the street.

“Yet yours, A. COCKBURN.”

Lord Alemoor died in the succeeding year, 1776, at Hawkhill. How truly Mrs. Cockburn lamented him may be seen from these letters :—

“My dear Sir,—Violy (Lord Alemoor's sister) thanks you for your kind inquiry. She has never been out of bed since the fatal Sunday. She is, however, more composed than she was, though she can get no sleep. Anne Pringle and Mark are here. My hand cannot write right. We have lost all the joy of life—one with whom every thought was connected, either in joy or grief. Adieu, my dear sir. We salute Mrs. Chalmers.”

“Sunday Evening, 6 o'clock, fourteen days and three hours since the death of Lord Alemoor.

“I thank you, dear sir, for your consolatory paper. It is well written. If it were worse, or

even indifferent, still I should be grateful for your friendly attention. I sent it to Miss Pringle, and will surely send it with this to Fairnlee.

“I am, sir, a veteran in sorrow. No human heart was ever more fortunate than mine in its warmest connections. The accidental friends of my youth (which can have no judgment for a proper election) have been what my most mature judgment would have gloried in acquiring, had the acquisition been to make. When you are told I survived my lover—my husband and guide of my youth—and after him the brother of my heart nearest in age to myself, you will think it a wonder I need consolation. My heart should be petrified or purified beyond the feelings of grief or any other passion. But I am not so constituted. God did not make me either a saint or a stone. In losing Lord Alemoor I have lost the friend and early companion of both these friends, and my greatest support under these losses. His superior understanding knew how to overawe, as well as his tenderness knew how to soothe, the passions.

He wished me to rely on his friendship, and I did so. I have no extravagant passions of grief to conquer. I saw and embraced his cold clay with the same feeling that I kneel before my God. I neither need reason nor religion to support this loss; both of them teach me what I have lost; the more I am mistress of my reason, the more I feel my worst. There lies by me a book which he commissioned, partly at my desire, and some transcripts of it in the reviews pleased him; it was the last book that was read to him, for that was the constant amusement in the sick bed. Half the first volume we heard read and observed upon. I have read the second; it is my only amusement; but when I come to anything that pleases me, how much do I feel! I remember every observation—not now, but twenty years back, for much his sisters and I had of that amusement with him. There was at Haining an old fir-tree I had known for forty years; it made the house smoke; it was cut down. I cried for *it*; one feels to lose an object they are accustomed *to*, even the old and useless. What is it, then, to lose a forty years'



friend, with all his great qualities fresh and entire! one on whose wisdom and counsel you could depend. Under the shadow of his wing you sat safe and sheltered from the storm. It appears to me as if heat, light, and air were taken from me. Indeed, his influence was great and beneficent; but I lose my own sorrows in that of his sisters.

“Next year is my grand climacteric, so it’s probable the separation will not be long. He has left a brother worthy of being *his* brother in every word and action. He is what hearts could wish, but few could hope—a good symptom that an idea of virtue and worth still remains in this desolate, licentious age, where hardly any one that dies escapes being hawked through the streets in ridiculous elegies. Was this that when the funeral went up the Canongate it was lined with people in the attitude of sorrow, and not a word spoken, only deepest silence? You are too young, sir, yet to know what it is to part with the companions of your youth and the friends of your age; we *must* submit to it, as we must to death, however abhorrent to our



nature ; and when we know that *must* is imposed upon us by the God who made and therefore loves us, we submit the better. Adieu ! May you be as happy in your friends through life as I have been, whatever the partings cost you ! I would rather be the friend of the deceased Lord Alemoor than Empress of Russia."

A year later comes once more "the season" in Edinburgh, with the old press of engagements and care for the enjoyment of others.

"You see Peter's answer. Our Jock will make one, so I fancy your number is complete. I hear Mrs. Horn is far from being well. Jenny Duff is feared she will not get leave to go. Could you procure me a concert-ticket for Miss Wauchope of Edmiston ? She is a heartsome lass, and would do well on Saturday."

There is also a renewal of the old social gatherings, the inducements to attend which are sometimes so drolly and inimitably blended :—

“Will you step in here to-morrow night? There is a hen, veterans, and philosophers.”

In 1779 there is a note which contains the last mention alike of Mrs. Cockburn's son and of Mrs. Chalmers:—

“Mrs. Cockburn's love to Mr. Chalmers. If he can bestow Tuesday evening on her and Adam, he will find something of the two-legged kind much to his taste. If sweet Anne Page come, so much the better. Compliments to the gudewife.”

It is significant of Mrs. Cockburn's nature that there is, at this time, a blank of a whole year in her correspondence with Mr. Chalmers. It is probable that, during 1780, the year of Mrs. Cockburn's son's death, Mrs. Chalmers also died, as her name drops out of the correspondence from this date.

Adam Cockburn appears to have inherited his father's delicate constitution, and to have been in declining health for some time. We know nothing of him, except from loving side-

lights thrown on him in his mother's letters. But slight as these are, we get the idea of a character true-hearted and manly, as his mother's was open-hearted and womanly. According to the report of the day he was engaged in marriage to his cousin, Anne Pringle, who had been reared in a great measure by his mother, and who did credit to that rearing by her beauty, sweetness, and fidelity to the memory of Adam Cockburn, a faint fragrant tradition of all of which yet lingers in her and his mother's Forest. Failing health, slender incomes, and slowness of promotion may have delayed the cousins' marriage. Adam Cockburn died on the 22nd of August, 1780, having attained the rank of captain of a dragoon regiment.

In one of the lately-recovered letters of Mrs. Cockburn she thus refers to her son :—

“I am much pleased with my son's character, justly marked in one line—‘endeared him to the few to whom he condescended to make himself known.’ That is truly characteristic. He had a reserve that grieved me much, because

he could not communicate his griefs, and even tried to hide from me the pains of death."

In another letter, when alluding, as she often does, to the rarity with which she had shed tears for her own sorrows, she says that not even by the death-bed of her son could she find that relief, until she rose up to write to his intimate friend, and then the pent-up tears flowed in a torrent.

In her will, when bequeathing a remembrance of her to Sir Walter Scott's father, she refers particularly to the kindness which she had received from him and his wife at the time of her great sorrow. The greatness of that sorrow is illustrated by Mrs. Cockburn's reflections, many years afterwards, on another poor woman's trial, and by the wise, tender advice offered to the sufferer.

"I feel much for the distress of that excellent young woman. I have drunk of the waters of affliction. . . . . Should she lose her husband or another child, she would recover; we need corrosives often. In the mean-

time, if she could accept personal severity it would do well;—ride in rain, wind, and storm till she's fatigued to death, and spin on a great wheel, and never sit down till weariness of nature makes her. I do assure you I have gone through all these exercises, and have reason to bless God my reason was preserved, and health now, more than belongs to my age."

If Mr. Chalmers lost his wife the same year that Mrs. Cockburn lost her son, the common ordeal of sorrow, of which one of them never wrote a word in the correspondence between the friends, must have served to draw the two closer together.

Mrs. Cockburn's first letter in the year following that of her son's death tells its own tale. The irrepressible humour of the writer glints through the weariness and the scar over the wound in the anguish of which she had been dumb:—

"I took an airing for my health lately, and came in so sick. I dined on valerian and snake-wort, a drug I heartily abhor. I intended that

day to dine with you, as I know your viands are always tempting, and I wish to be tempted—tempted; but Satan would not let me come, but confined me to my couch. Now, sirs, I beg pardon for being old and weak, for upon my honour I cannot help it. I love my friends, if possible, more than ever; but *you see* I must lie horizontal ways. I cannot eat. This season puts me in mind of what Swift says to Stella:—

“So little gets for what she gives,  
We really wonder how she lives.”

I declare I am so weak I can hardly walk; meantime, I cannot for the soul of me get my soul at rest. I must know how you are; send Anne to tell me. It's a little angelick figure that makes me think of those I am going to. Adieu, my dear friends. I imagine I may write after I am dead.”

This is the burden of a few more tired, clinging, tremulously gay letters:—

“I wish Anne and you would invite yourselves some night to toddy and supper. I could

easily get more hands, but I have no strength for fabricating an invited supper. Yours, Saturday, Sunday, and all,—A. COCKBURN.”

“Let me know how the child is to-night. Yours,—A. C.”

“My friend, Sir Hew Dalrymple, is very ill; I expect the worst. Well, he has enjoyed the best of his palace, *the project* and *the prospect*. What are all our enjoyments of life but these two words? I shall outlive all my early friends. Thank God, I can adopt young ones with pleasure. Suff is fond of Anne—sees nothing like her.”

In 1783 something of the old flow of spirits reappears in the offer of a treat no longer craved :—

“Mrs. Cockburn puts Mr. Chalmers and Miss Anne in mind that unpareleled brose is ready for them on Monday, 3rd, in the mansion of their friend,—A. COCKBURN.

“Cannot spell unpareleled.”

The ungrumbling, ungrudging sweetness of



the next letters rises to nobility : it is a sight worth stopping to look at. With inexhaustible and tender sympathy, the old bereaved woman of seventy-five enters into the joys of others which she can no longer hope to share ; only alluding to her own sorrows by incidental and innocent little touches, that, in their very unselfishness, go straight to hearts which bitter outcries and morose gloom would have repelled.

“I have not broke cover these three weeks ; even in a chair been coughing with the utmost vigour. If I live till April I may be able to see you—indeed, I am growing very frail. You are well off that has such a companion as my sweet Anne Page. My Anne Pr[ingle] was at the Archers’ last night, where was six set {my fair American came here at eleven to supper, and was in fine spirits with a country bumpkin}—people all merry, and men, women, and matrons danced. I love to hear of it—it’s like the days of my zenith and health. Peace be restored to us, Amen ! Love to my sweet Anne. Thanks for the crocus dish.”

“I have received all your kind remembrances

of my good friend, both just before you went and this morning, by a salt-wife—a basket full of the cleverest, living, crawling creatures ever I saw—crabs, I believe, but yet when they are boiled they are like chicken lobsters; also three fine small trout—they look like river trout, but we shall see. I'm sorry and angry at your attempting to cast your cowl: mind not to be so young again. Now for news. I had a letter from Mark Pringle, where he says, 'The parties themselves being hurried, requested me to inform you that Mr. Shaw and Mrs. Menzies joined hands Thursday, in St. Martin's Church, in presence of your humble servant—who acted as father and gave the lady away—Lady Townsend, Miss Townsend, and Miss Montgomery. They set out immediately for Plymouth, 30th April.' Now, how to send this to you is the question. I fancy the post-office is surest; so, with my love to the lassies, and thanks for all your good things, I am, dear Brownny, yours,

"A. COCKBURN.

"Me come! Alas! alas! long since I was in a coach."

"Thank you, my good friend, for not playing me a trick most of my best friends have done—to walk before me, though I am entitled to take the door by many years' seniority. I began to think you were worse, and had given orders to call when yours arrived. Happy that I did not hear of doctors, et-cetera, which would have done me ill, and you no good. I am so desponding now, I never believe anybody can recover, so nobody tells me of such friends, so thanks for dry and sappy. Now keep well, and oblige your friend,—A. C.

"As for me, I sit in my black chair, weak, old, and contented."

"Though my body is not portable, I visit you in my prayers and in my cups."

"It's difficult for me to inquire after my good friends, having lost my fleet page, Jenny. Sorry was I to hear you was confined by rheumatiz. I hope you are better. You would be sadly missed by your Christmas friends; for me, all seasons and their change is the same. I wear the same infirm carcass, and submit to its infirmity as cheerfully as I can. My love to the two

dears—may they have health, mirth, and lovers in plenty ; and may you get whatever your heart desires, if it is good for you, prays your affectionate friend, A. COCKBURN.”

With more deliberation and earnestness she records to Dr. Douglas :—

“Now I feel all the blessings of old age, and thank my Creator and Preserver that He did not hear my prayer for death when my mind was in a tumult of passion and despair. I now seem to myself to be seated on a height under a serene sky, looking back on the tempest I have escaped, and thankful to my Preserver for allowing me ease, eyesight, and a capacity to be amused with kind friends, and a heart grateful and cheered by their kindness. No anxious cares for futurity, no desires for what is out of my power, a wish to make everybody as happy as I can, or at least less miserable, a violent desire to be more devout than I am. I pray to be so ; for God himself can only infuse the love of himself into the human soul, and, waiting patiently, I answer

myself, 'You are seeking pleasure here that belongs to a future world.' Am I right?"

"All the world are feasting, and I cannot get a man to eat a turkey with me to-day, and I think a female feast but flat; however, we must take what we can get."

Here is what may prove a valuable piece of information regarding an old beverage:—

"The balm will not be ready for brewing till July, for it does not grow yellow till then."

Next follows Mrs. Cockburn's description of the result of a fashion with the revival of which we are every now and then threatened:—

"Do you know, I did not remember Kate t'other day. I fancied her a Balcarres bairn—the nasty powder which spoils her fine hair disguised her."

The announcement of a batch of marriages does not omit the opposite side of the question, socially and morally:—

"Robie Anderson is to be married to Lady

Anne Charteris ; Macdowel of Logan to Lucy Johnstone. Ante-marriages—a young knight about a year married has left his wife, as she is a devil and he cannot live in peace ; Lewis of France has sent his wife to meditate in the country. You'll see a man here burned his wife just for a Sunday's amusement."

Here are miscellaneous extracts :—

"My heart and my taste in eating would soon carry me to a fish-dinner with you ; the spirit is willing, the body is unfit for any sort of motion. . . . I return the basket, full of thanks for fine trouts ; they came just in time for supper, and feasted Colonel Lyon, Peter Inglis, Muir, and me. This town affords nothing but perpetual herring."

"I wish you would send me a pen, for really I cannot write for want ; I sent a dozen and a half to a lady in your name. I have a receipt for toothache, cured a lady subject to it, and now has not had it for twenty years. Shall I send it to you? In haste,—SANS PEN."

"I own the temptation of my dear Mrs.



Mackay is great—I do not need any to come to you; but I am incapable of sitting on any chair: I have also lost all my teeth, and I cannot yet submit to let my joes see me so disfigured. You send me palatable meat that my tongue can masticate—that's right. When will we drop this clay tenement we pay so dear a rent for? When shall we meet in a better?—Yours, both here and there.”

Is this saying of Lord Kaimes preserved? “Lord Kaimes is writing yet anecdotes of his life; he is also sitting to a statuary for his statue in marble. . . . Somebody rejoiced to see him so cleverly employed. “What,” says he, “should I sit with my finger in my cheek waiting till death take me?”

Mrs. Cockburn herself tells us the original of a toast which she had once composed—the same Sir Walter Scott erroneously applied to his father, unless, indeed, Mrs. Cockburn may have let fly her shaft with a double aim:—

“You know my earliest and much-loved friend, Mr. Swinton, has gone to heaven—as twenty-



six years since I made a toast to him, which may be his epitaph:—

“To the friend of affliction, the soul of affection,  
Who may hear the last trump without fear of detection.”

The winters were hard on the cheerful old woman.

“Do ye stand the storm? I lie it—my legs are of little use.”

“I hardly knew I existed all last week, except by the exertion of coughing and blowing my nose. Now a blink of the sun has brought me alive again, like a fly; so I will send some black lines to you to ask how you do, and if you have got any new regimen from your London doctor, and what effect. This should be a gay week in Edinburgh, but I see and hear of nothing but rain. Oh yes! I have heard of two marriages, both to widowers; they must be true, because nobody could have invented them. . . . I am as I told you; but, dead or alive, yours and the bairns’,—A. COCKBURN.”

“I hope you divert yourself with novels. I

have read out one library and begun another. Have you read ——'s 'Religious Opinions'? I recommend it, though his name is recommendation sufficient.

"I think it is winter already, for I am old and cold."

Dating according to New Style was a change of fashion introduced into Scotland in Mrs. Cockburn's day; hence this joke:—

"I enter my sixteenth year on the 8th October. A pretty miss!"

She writes of her birthday again:—

"I was once born in September, but now it's in October."

In age and weakness her sympathies were wide as ever. She writes:—

"It's a solitary life now. Selkirk Ball was yesterday; Lady Napier, Queen. . . . I have thirteen sheets from Plymouth, with a full description of the royal, grand gala. O happy king! Poor Lewis!"

“This comes by a young man that wishes much to be employed in some stirring business in the excise or customs. If you will speak to him he will explain what he wishes and what he can do. He is an honest, clever lad; his name Sandy —, born in the Isle of Skye.”

Besides the toasts for which Mrs. Cockburn had a great reputation, here is an allusion to another old pastime—that of writing character, in which she had also dabbled like a busy woman:—

“If ye promise to return it, I will send you the characters of two ladies, writ forty years ago by a gentleman you know. Send your man on Sunday for it.

“To satisfy your curiosity, the writer of the characters was Monboddó. Delia is Lady Dalrymple Cranstoun, of merry memory; and Sophonie was her intimate friend, Mrs. P. Cockburn. You see it is rather a panegyrick than a character. . . . If you like the Ossian poetry, I have found something of my own written in that

style. But, oh dear! this, my last and only pen, says, I am yours sincerely, A. C."

"Sorry I am you still suffer; these eastern breezes suit me very ill too. I feel every weak part—I feel I have a neck, an arm, a shoulder; and I don't want to feel any of them."

But, in spite of these eastern breezes, Mrs. Cockburn narrates the visit of an old friend with all her old sprightliness:—

"I had the joy of seeing Sir Robert Keith the very day he dined with you. He is ten year younger since I saw him, which is twelve years ago. Bless us! how we talked!—in short, we could not get speech for speaking. I intended he should take your Anne and my Anne to Vienna; but behold, he's off without either! My Anne thought fit, for love of him, to take the blybs: it's better it struck out on the skin, so it was but skin deep. . . . I have dined four days abroad within these two weeks, which is wonderful. There has been a universal flitting among my people. Your lover, Lady Fair, has come down a storey."

This is not a bad turning off of her infirmities by a fine lady hard upon eighty:—

“I certainly did not get that billet-doux ye mention, as I am commonly ready with my pen. It’s true I have been engaged for a week with so ardent a lover that I could not escape from his embrace. These Spaniards! His name is Don Sorebonia Rheumatica. He took my pen-hand so hard a gripe he would not let it move;—jealousy, I suppose; fear I should write to other lovers. . . . My salt has lost its savour, but love is yours.—A. C.”

Nor is this:—

“It was fortunate that I was asleep t’other morning, else I might have lost my reputation; for I certainly would have received you *à couchée*, as I believe my nightcap was clean. Had it been otherwise, I am too much of a coquette to have appeared.”

“Doctor —— said, and it’s true—‘None but fools or beggars can starve of cold.’ To show I’m none of these, I’m clad this moment, and always am, in a scarlet flannel short gown

over all my clothes. Some of my lovers allege it is coquetry, I look so handsome in it, but I'm warm. . . . "It is not my maxim but my nature to write what I think, and never to think what I write."

There are lively comments on the excitement caused by Mrs. Siddons's visit to Edinburgh. In unusually hot May weather, the doors of the theatre were besieged from eleven o'clock forenoon till five afternoon, and there were more than two thousand applications for six hundred places. The very debates of the General Assembly, then sitting, were interrupted, in order that preachers might hear the great mistress of eloquence.

Mrs. Cockburn could no longer mingle in such a throng, but she could hear of it with the greatest interest, and be entertained by its *contres-temps*, as this letter testifies:—

"She [Mrs. Siddons] has occasioned much mischief—broken heads, broken shins, of which Mr. Pringle is one; but he has made his sister famous for strength. When she saw him fallen

she lifted him up as he had been a pussie, and neglected to accept Duke Roxburgh's hand, which he offered to hand her out of the fray. I hear one man has got five challenges."

"I am in high provocation with the gay world. One would think the very mention of a Christian duty scares them from their pleasures. Nobody of fashion would attend Mrs. Siddons, because she acted for charity; and Paul might have preached for the Orphan Hospital—he would have had as thin an audience as Mr. Hill, who is next best to Paul. What can be the reason, think ye? Should not our magistrates have gone in a body to the workhouse? Pray are they a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well? I dined yesterday with Lady Fair, Lady Don, Miss Murray, and Don Mark. I got a fine sleep after the fatigue of her stair. The influenza has come here. The treasurer has had it, but is so well again as to go to dinner yesterday where Mrs. Siddons is to be till Glasgow theatre open. Our lawyers have presented her with a grand tea-tray with a fine inscription.



Her curtsey of leave brought the tears into every eye. She needs no words: she can speak with every gesture, every motion."

Here are more free selections:—

"I was thinking of you in my bed, and saying to myself, 'I use my friend as we all do our Maker—forget him, unless we receive something uncommon from him.'"

"I owe my good friend and kind purveyor a vote of thanks for his kind card and fine trout; also for the sight of a rarity—a creel-wife that would not take a dram."

"I would not write my thanks so soon, but that I imagine Lady Fair is cheated of her pears. You said in your note to me, 'Compliments to Lady Fair, with a few pears.' I emptied my basket, and thought the man had gone in with hers; but they never arrived. *N'importe*, she shares with me. It was not the sober man who won't take a dram and has an eye."

"Have none of you got the Effie Lindsay yet? Neither has your obliged A. COCKBURN."

“I will make no apology—not *I*. I might as well beg a milliner’s pardon for bidding her make me a cap. But to my story. One of the under-officers of my household, commonly called the water-wife, being often in a state of intoxication, I had again and again ordered her dismissal, but found I had as little power in giving or retaining officers as the King of Britain, unless my Premier chose it. I then inquired what extraordinary merits she had to counterbalance her enormities, and was informed a little ragged child, who gets our sour milk, and whom I always supposed to be her own bastard she bore nine years ago, was only a foundling which the parish had given her to suckle (her own child having died), and that she had maintained the child ever since, getting nothing from the Kirk-session but her nurse-fee. I own this made a full excuse for all her sins. I have got the little creature some clean clothes, and find her the cleverest errand-goer I ever saw, and most distinct at a long message, and as literal as Homer’s messengers. I also find a little deranged sister of the water-

carrier's has taught her the Catechism, and learned her to read. Now comes my use for you. Mrs. Douglas's uncle, Mr. Tod, is Father to the Orphan Hospital; and by the account I hear of that house, I think if our young ladies were educated there instead of boarding-schools, it would make a general reform of manners. Now, if this poor child grew up under the wings of the water-wife! Alas! she has fine black eyes. In short, I have set my heart on preserving her from my friend; so, if you will petition Mr. Tod, you will greatly oblige me, and secondly, do a real act of charity. Her name is Christie Fletcher, for she was found in a stair of Fletcher's Land. I congratulate you on getting my niece, Mrs. Sands, for a neighbour. You will find her a well-bred, entertaining woman, and him a plain, worthy man.

“I have no more time. Consider now what has been said, and lay it to heart. Amen.”

Here we have a shrewd definition:—

“I know not what to say about our poor king.

The prince feels he is a son. Yorke is a two-legged animal."

Again news of marriages,—the first two contemplated under exceptional circumstances:—

"I have a long letter just now from Anne Keith. All doing well with Lord Bal. He is so keen of his brother's wedding, he has made a point of Lady Dick (the bride's mother) coming over and having the marriage performed at his bedside. They are to humour him."

"What think ye of Andrew Stewart's wedding? Threescore is a reasonable age.

"Yea, Stewart gave his brother £10,000 on the wedding-day. Glad the excellent Dempster can dance yet. I had the mind to dance an election minuet for him at St. Andrew's with a candle-maker."

"What think ye of cousin Mackay's wedding? She has strange luck to Highlanders. God bless you! Amen.

"Perhaps you have not heard of her wedding, so I will tell you. She was married Thursday morning in the Abbey to Mr. Farquhar-

son, of Invercauld, and went away with him directly."

The author of "Auld Robin Gray" was known from childhood to Mrs. Cockburn, who could hardly fail to be acquainted with the fact of the authorship; but Lady Anne Lindsay swore her friends to secrecy, and there is no allusion to the ballad in the personal description of the writer, even at a time when in the world of fashion the "Werther hat" had given place to the "Robin Gray hat."

"I had a visit yesterday from the Dowager Lady Balcarres and her two fair daughters, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret, who, I assure you, are so far from being the worse of the wearing that they are handsomer than ever. Lady Anne is grown not jolly, but plump, which has greatly improved her looks."

Mrs. Cockburn had still a few old friends to lose and to mourn for. This friend's death she had foreboded :—

“My old friend Sir Hew Dalrymple is going fast. I fancy Mrs. Dalrymple and the children should have been in last week for the High School. By their not coming I reckon he is worse.”

“How are you, my friend? I should have thanked you before now for goodies, but really both my mentals and corporals were frost-bound. My earliest companion and constant friend he was, Sir Hew Dalrymple, died Tuesday last.”

“This minute my young favourite has been with me. His grandfather’s corpse will not come till Tuesday se’nnight. It’s ten days yesterday since he died. None of us can tell the reason of the delay. Hew has just read me the chapter he wishes for the funeral sermon—thirteenth chapter, First Corinthians. He says all his failings proceeded from charity. What a noble boy he is!”

“My fingers and my fancy are frozen, but my heart is warmly yours.—A. C.

“My old friend is to be buried to-morrow.”

The old lady was delighted with “Burke on

the French Revolution," and it provoked some sparks of her former vivacity :—

“What are the natural rights of man ?  
To oppress the weak, take all they can.  
What are the natural rights of woman ?  
If she does not like her spouse, to take another man.  
From natural rights, from liberty,  
Good Lord deliver me ! Amen.

“I am quite in love with Burke. Who would have thought it ? My mind agrees in every sentiment he utters. Such a book has not appeared for a century.”

This is probably Mrs. Cockburn's last poetical epistle :—

“While time runs on, and years are flying,  
True affection's never dying ;  
Its proofs are annuals strong and clear,  
Which I receive from Chalmers dear.  
Dull thanks in prose I would not send,  
And said, ‘Dear Muse, now pray attend.’  
She came, but with her came a blast,  
So white, so strong, she would not stay,  
And bid me say ‘Good day, good day.’”

“Health, love, and peace be with my earliest friend and his most excellent nymphs this and



every year of their lives. Thanks for all your good gifts, especially the capacious Dutchman. It is the first goody I ever appropriated to my sole use. No, I indulged Lady Fair in a dram of it; but never told the giver, for fear of jealousy. . . . This is my first penmanship of the year, from your sincere friend, on her own bed, her own back, writ with her own hand; so witness my mark, A. C."

Mrs. Cockburn writes again:—

"Always willing to contribute to the ease and pleasure of others, why should you suffer pain? I wish I could transfer it to some who never feel but for themselves. But we are assured from good authority chastisement is a proof of the love of our heavenly Parent. Who, then, would not kiss the rod?"

"Are you not starved? I imagine this winter will congeal my blood; and so adieu to my good friend, but not for ever—no, no."

"May you be ever free from pain and salt-pans! Amen."

"It is long since I heard of or from my dear

friend. I fear you are in distress. Do let somebody tell me about you. I hope the dear wenches are well. I expected Mark and Anne all the week, and delayed writing till Anne should see you, but they are not arrived. . . . I am, with my blessing to you and the bairns, your deaf, blind, lame, sincere friend, A. COCKBURN."

Yet the kindly old woman took pains to write "to Anne, my friend," such good advice as the following :—

"I greatly disapprove of the licentiousness of publishing living characters. Satire, no doubt, is one weapon to scourge vice and folly; but it rather hinders than mends when roughly handled. . . . A delicate music does more good to the human mind than any satire. Two lines have often made me assume a cheerful air when I was sad at heart :—

'What a beautiful creature 's a woman of reason,  
Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season!'

"Never read bad characters, my dear Anne."

After penmanship had become a task to her, Mrs. Cockburn could, for the gratification of a young girl's curiosity, laboriously take down "the list of Selkirk Ball, which turned out very heartsome." Then come two long columns of ladies and gentlemen, with the summing-up,— "Everybody danced with everybody,"—and the careful chronicling of a class of sovereigns who have long been deposed:—"Whytebank and Miss Elliot, King and Queen. Mrs. Mackay, Queen-elect for next ball; Mr. Ogilvy (the nabob), King."

Here is a treat Mrs. Cockburn is still able to enjoy; and what she can enjoy, she enjoys to the last:—

"I was yesterday on a grand expedition—went with Violy Pringle and Lady Fair in a carriage to see Raeburn's pictures. Wonderful was the sights!—I saw 'Edinburgh going out of Town;' the 'Tron Kirk,' my delight; 'View of the South Bridge, College,' &c. As for Raeburn, nothing can equal that picture of 'Sir John and Lady Clerk.' Lady Arniston looked so glad to see me, I had almost kissed her. Tib

Hall—her very self. After all this, I dined with Lady Don : a farewell dinner to our dear American family, who sail to-morrow. God grant a safe voyage ! What a charge for a mother—five fine creatures ! No, no, for all your questions. Lady Fair and all the Pringles well. Mark arrived at eleven last night. I have not yet seen him, as it is only eleven o'clock. I must go back to Raeburn. There is John Macgowan in high beauty ; he's very nicely drest ; he really makes as good a figure as any in the room. I wish I saw you and your two nymphs on one canvas ; you sitting, Kate giving you tea or wine, Anne at the harpsichord. I am sorry you still feel you have a jawbone. My tongue has done a great deal of business, for at last it has pushed out two teeth that were very fashious. My blessing to the misses, and believe me, though sans teeth, never sans love to you, while A. COCKBURN."

This birthday, with its appropriate feast, was very nearly the last :—

"A liberal heart deviseth liberal things ; yet

you did not know what you sent will grace my birthday—the first I have kept at home. Good Lady Fair made me keep it with her for twenty-five years, and she insists on me giving her a dinner that day. I have not been down my stair since that day twelvemonths. More venerable than me? That's impossible. I set down my years to sum them up, and see:—

A Virgin . . . . .	17
A Wife . . . . .	22
A Mother . . . . .	49
A Widow . . . . .	39
	<hr/>
	127

A goodly sum! and really, to be a woman of a hundred and twenty-seven, I write tolerable, though I can hardly read it myself. . . . Would I had the power to remove pain! No; bodily evil is soul's physick. Our Master knows best. I hope we will not need the grace of patience in the other world—much needed here."

"The note that brought the goodies said she would call next day, so I wrote the enclosed. She got the basket. You certainly mistook—you said you had sent a little bottle,

instead of which it was the widow's cruse. The people drank Mr. Chalmers, and the health of the day (being my birthday), out of it. The cruse was remarkable. It's a pity woman does not mend with age, as wine does. Shall I tell you my company? First, your lover, our Lady Fair, with her miss; secondly, niece Simpson and her miss; Suff Johnstone and me made a woman; Colonel Lyon, nephew Peter Inglis, and the Laird of Dunnottar. Pity society should fatigue. I enjoyed my friends, for spirit was willing—flesh weak indeed.—Yours sincerely, A. C."

So the curtain falls on a wonderful glimpse of the old life of Crichton Street and Castle Hill, with its sunny foreground and dark background—the latter "the soul's physick," as its bright old heroine wrote, to prevent the former becoming a hard, cold glare.

In Alison Cockburn's long career—which was long enough to make her a connecting-link between the Edinburgh of Allan Ramsay and Burns, and the Edinburgh of Scott—her house



was the rallying-ground, while she was herself a queen, of the literati of Edinburgh.

In a letter dated 1786 Mrs. Cockburn writes:—

“The town is at present agog with the ploughman poet, who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession, strong and coarse, but has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has seen Duchess Gordon and all the gay world: his favourite for looks and manners is Bess Burnet—no bad judge, indeed.”

In another letter:—

“Sorry I am my poems are not returned from niece Scott, though she promised them this week. I would have been glad to oblige Miss Douglas with them. The one I admire most is the ‘Cottar’s Saturday Night.’ The man will be spoiled, if he can spoil; but he keeps his simple manners, and is quite sober. No doubt he will be at the Hunters’ Ball to-morrow, which has made all women and milliners mad. Not a gauze-cap under two guineas—many ten, twelve, &c.”



In a third letter she asks :—

“Are you fond of poetry? Do you know Burns? I am to get a very pretty little thing he calls ‘The Rosebud.’ Maybe I’ll send it next week. I wish I could write a ballad called ‘The Forest Restored!’”

This curious reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott’s youth has been already published in Lockhart’s “Life of Scott:”—

“I last night supped in Mr. Walter Scott’s. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on; it was a description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm; he lifted up his eyes and hands. ‘There’s the mast gone,’ says he; ‘crash it goes: they will all perish!’ After his agitation he turns to me. ‘That is too melancholy,’ says he; ‘I had better read you somewhat more amusing.’ I preferred a little chat, and asked his opinion of Milton and other books he was reading, which he gave me wonderfully indeed. One of his observations was,

‘How strange it was that Adam, just new come into the world, should know everything. That must be the poet’s fancy,’ says he. But when told he was created perfect by God himself, he instantly yielded. When he was taken to bed last night he told his aunt he liked that lady. ‘What lady?’ says she. ‘Why, Mrs. Cockburn; for I think she’s a *virtuoso* like myself.’ ‘Dear Walter,’ says his aunt, ‘what is a *virtuoso*?’ ‘Don’t you know? Why, it’s one who will know everything.’ Now, sir, you will think this a very silly story. Pray what age do you suppose that boy to be? Name it now before I tell you. ‘Why, twelve or fourteen.’ No such thing; he is not quite six, and he has a lame leg, for which he was a year at Bath, and has acquired the perfect English accent, which he has not lost since he came, and he reads like a Garrick. You will allow this an uncommon exotic.”

Mrs. Cockburn, with her wise economy and simplicity, was by all her antecedents and propensities an aristocrat. More than forty years a widow, she lived to see the dying out of the City

Guard and the Caddies, and the taking away of the Luckenbooths. She saw the Burgh Moor built upon for half a mile in the line of Princes Street. During that memorable period, the parlour in Castle Hill or in Crichton Street—with chairs worked in faded tent-stitch, Queen Anne's china, and tabby cat—beheld the cream of Edinburgh society for two generations: not only the *élite* of rank, but of what Lord Kelly, in his vile pun, called the "eaterati." Among Mrs. Cockburn's constant visitors were Mrs. Murray Keith (old Lord Balcarres' Dr. Anne Keith, and Sir Walter Scott's Mrs. Bethune Baliol), the Dowager Countess Anne of Balcarres, with her famous daughter, Lady Anne Lindsay, Mackenzie, Robertson, Hume, and Home, down to young Walter Scott, and very possibly his lively friends—brother advocates and volunteers—Kirkpatrick Sharp, Erskine, and Cranstoun, with their piquante and friendly sisters, Mary Anne Erskine, afterwards Mrs. Campbell Colquhoun of Clathick, and Jane Anne Cranstoun, Basil Hall's Countess of Purgstall.

In the winter of 1756, six or seven years before

the date of the earliest of those letters of hers which have been recovered, Mrs. Cockburn was no doubt an eager and interested supporter of the tragedy written by the Scotch minister, acted in an Edinburgh theatre for many nights, and attended by a portion of his clerical brethren; and it is more than probable she was interested in the contests which arose in consequence of it in the Kirk Courts. Doubtless Mrs. Cockburn shared the zeal of Mrs. Betty Fletcher, daughter of Lord Milton of Brunstane, who, by her interest with my lord her father, and with Archibald, Duke of Argyll, helped to prevent John Home of Athelstaneford and "Jupiter" Carlyle of Inveresk, his friend, from being expelled from the Kirk as two of its most degenerate sons.

In the autumn of 1773, in the course of her hail of notes to Mr. Chalmers, although not noticed in them, Alison Cockburn had the best chance of paying her duty to the mighty bear and lexicographer who arrived on the 14th of the previous August at the White Horse Inn, and took the famous night walk up

the unsavoury High Street, arm-in-arm with Mr. Boswell, to Mr. Boswell's house in James's Court. Neither would she have got a rebuff for her pains, because the great, good, uncivil Tory Doctor kept a soft spot in his heart for a fine woman of quality. Among the illustrious seven houses which the proud biographer carefully reckoned up as those that Dr. Johnson honoured with his company at dinner were the houses of Sir Alexander Dick and Lady Colville — an Erskine of Kelly, and an old, intimate neighbour of the Balcarres family. At one or other of these dinners Lady Anne Lindsay made the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson, and so in all likelihood did Mrs. Cockburn.

As years waned, Alison Cockburn tied a lace hood over her undimmed auburn toupee, wrapped a shawl round her shoulders, with their puffed-out Queen Bess sleeves, and exchanged her fan for her snuff-box—very probably with her son Adam's portrait inside the lid ; but her cheery gift of humour flourished unabated. No calamity could permanently crush, still less sour her. Sir Walter Scott knew her in her

great age, and he spoke of her mental power and spirit as something almost miraculous. He makes special mention of her *petits soupers* in Crighton Street, where wit and genius met their match, and thought themselves well entertained by—

“Three nothings on three plates of delf,”

according to the hostess's apt quotation, when the nothings were seasoned with the charm of her manner and conversation.

Incidentally, Sir Walter, while writing to Lady Anne Barnard, recalls the ludicrous traits of a common friend—Suff Johnstone—and gives a specimen of the freedom as well as the grace of these old social gatherings.

One evening all the set were at Mrs. Cockburn's in Crighton Street, and with the Scotts and the Lindsays was their eccentric ally, Miss Suff, who, before women's rights were mooted, took the law into her own hand, and wore a man's great-coat, hat, and square-buckled shoes; practising, along with the habiliments, a man's habit of striding, spitting, and swearing. She shod a horse better than a smith,



played on a fiddle, and sang a man's song in a man's bass voice.

Gentle young Anne Scott's feet happening to tread upon the space appropriated by the Amazon, Anne was punished by a rough kick on the shins, and the fierce challenge, "What are ye wab-wabstering there for?" The innocent offender was overwhelmed, and the rest of the party electrified.

Both Sir Walter and Lady Anne bear emphatic testimony to Mrs. Cockburn's goodness; and her letters speak for themselves. She had truth, generosity, and tenderness, without which no very great personal influence can ever be attained; qualities which shed radiance over the corresponding reign of two still better known leaders of society—Mrs. Delany and Madame de Sévigné.

As a consequence of the old game of writing characters, we have two characters of Mrs. Cockburn—the one written by herself, the other a merrily impudent parody upon the first, written by her friend, Andrew Pringle of Haining, Lord Alemoor. These characters are not very



reliable sources of information, as the writer is only half in earnest, and writes chiefly for the purpose of displaying ingenuity in fitting into each other a bundle of paradoxes.

According to the lady's character of herself, she is a sentimental, high-flown woman, not so much unreasonable as impulsive, with an idle susceptibility to pity, but with no abiding sense of her obligations to her neighbours. She is haughty, but not sensitive; sufficiently ashamed of herself to tempt her to be a hypocrite; while at the same time she is an incorrigible, although not a hardened, sinner. The sentence which follows, and which is the last, appears fabricated in order to play with fire—and David Hume—in the approved fashion of the wittily irreverent beaux and belles of the eighteenth century. It introduces the great argument of the day, and, by an epigrammatic contrast, pits the authority of a cynically honest and philosophic history against the inspiration of the Bible, in which Mrs. Cockburn was a sincere believer. The character winds up with the sufficiently gloomy moral reflection, "If I am

never to be better and happier than I am, I had better never have been born."

Andrew Pringle, the best speaker at the Scotch bar in his day, in a mockingly mischievous travesty of Alison Cockburn's words, reverses the original. He prefers contrary charges of inconstancy, arrogance, self-conceit, hard-heartedness, caprice, wilfulness, contumaciousness, and deceit. He follows her lead in lugging in the Bible and David Hume, but gives as an explanation of her conduct that Alison Cockburn will not renounce her errors, and yet will not consent to scepticism, "as I can neither be better nor happier than I am." Without the key which Mrs. Cockburn's letters supply to the close connection and cordial intimacy between the couple, it might have been possible to attribute any amount of malice to Lord Alenmoor in this sarcasm, in place of the privileged impertinence of one who was well-nigh a brother.

Alison Cockburn died in her house in Crichton Street, on the 22nd of November, 1794, aged eighty-two. She had survived her young lover,

John Aikman, sixty-three years, her husband forty-one years, and her son fourteen years. It is pleasant to think that she had still her grand-nephew and niece, Mark and Anne Pringle, her Brownie and his daughters, with Miss Violy, Lord Alemoor's sister, to watch by her death-bed and close her eyes. In her will, made several years before her death, she disposed of the bulk of her property, which was not much more than three thousand pounds, dividing it chiefly between her niece Simpson and her niece Anne Pringle, who should have been her daughter. She left many friendly little bequests, and in expressing her wishes she alluded more than once to her son. She desired locks of her hair to be enclosed in two rings for her "earliest and most constant and affectionate friends, Mrs. Keith of Ravelston, and her brother, William Swinton" (the latter of whom had predeceased Mrs. Cockburn); and she did not forget her cat. She gave directions for her funeral, and referred to her epitaph, which she seems to have written, as she did her character, but it has not been preserved. She was buried beside her son—the

tombstone over the grave bearing no other inscription than their names and the dates of their death.

Old ladies yet living remember those who knew and loved the last remnants of Mrs. Cockburn's circle. "Old Auntie Violy," as they called her, dwelt at Haining with her nephew and niece, who were also Mrs. Cockburn's grand-nephew and niece; and Auntie Violy never grew old in mind, though she lived to be nearly a hundred in years. She was always anxious for her nephew the laird to marry, had troops of young ladies at Haining for the purpose of providing him with a wife, and among them Anne Chalmers. Mrs. Cockburn's "sweet Anne Page" at last captivated "Don Mark." Their daughter could well remember her aunt Anne Pringle, who in her beauty and goodness had won and refused many an excellent offer, and lived and died unmarried for Adam Cockburn's sake. An old crooked tree stood at the back of the house of Fairnalee; and the third generation were wont to point to it and say Anne Pringle cared more for that old tree than for all the

woods of Fairnalee—it was believed because she had sat under its shelter “on the bonnie summer nights” with Adam Cockburn. Perhaps this was the “naked oak” where Alison Rutherford had often met John Aikman, and of which Mrs. Cockburn wrote in one of her letters.

Alison Cockburn's gifts were eminently social, and bore a very considerable resemblance to those of Mary Pendarvis, belonging as the women did to the same era. The Edinburgh lady also was great in toasts, sentiments, and improvised verses. On occasions she, too, might have performed the curious feat of singing “A black-bird sat on a pear-tree,” with sips of water between the words and the notes of the chorus. Mrs. Cockburn's song on the household at Balcarres is a succession of toasts in verse, supposed to have been composed on the spur of the moment. But a much happier instance of her wit is her satirical song on the rejection of her brother's hand by a fantastic lady of fashion—a parody on “Nancy's to the greenwood gane :”—

“ Nancy’s to the assembly gone  
To hear the fops a-chattering ;  
And Willie he has followed her,  
To win her love by flattering.

\* \* \* \*

“ Wad ye hae bonnie Nancy ?  
Na, I’ll hae ane was learned to fence,  
An’ that can please my fancy,  
Ane that can flatter, bow, and dance,  
An’ mak’ love to the ladies ;  
*That kens how folk behave in France,*  
An’s bauld among the caddies.”

Can the reader not call up heartless Nancy, mincing in her high-heeled shoes and her *négligé* ; the husband of her choice in his coat without a neck, and “ his own hair ;” for to appear in it was deemed “ vastly ” more conceited at that particular epoch than to figure in any form of wig ?

Alison Cockburn’s “ I’ve seen the smiling,” although not equal to “ I’ve heard them lilting,” is deservedly a national song. To borrow the use of an obsolete word, it is elegantly melodious in its woe, passion, and despair. There may be a degree of pomp in the rendering of the woe, the passion and the despair may be slightly elaborated and artificial after the manner of the



day, but they are woe, passion, and despair nevertheless. In

“I’ve seen the smiling  
Of fortune beguiling,”

sorrow’s crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

“But now ’tis fled—fled far away,”

is the moaning reiteration of every stripped and bereft Job.

“I’ve seen Tweed’s silted streams,  
Glittering in the sunny beams,  
Grow drumly and dark as they row’d on their way,”  
is a fine local figure.

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### THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST.

I’ve seen the smiling  
Of fortune beguiling ;  
I’ve felt all its favours, and found its decay :  
Sweet was its blessing,  
Kind its caressing ;  
But now ’tis fled—fled far away.

I’ve seen the forest  
Adorned the foremost  
With flowers of the fairest, most pleasant and gay ;



Sae bonnie was their blooming !  
Their scent the air perfuming !  
But now they are wither'd and a' wede away.

I've seen the morning  
With gold the hills adorning,  
And loud tempest storming before the mid-day.  
I've seen Tweed's sillar streams,  
Glittering in the sunny beams,  
Grow drumly and dark as they row'd on their way.

O fickle Fortune !  
Why this cruel sporting ?  
Oh, why still perplex us, poor sons of a day ?  
Nae mair your smiles can cheer me,  
Nae mair your frowns can fear me ;  
For the Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

## MISS JEAN ELLIOT.

1727—1805.

IN another nook of the pastoral Lowlands, where the Cheviots are the softer sentinels beginning to rise on the horizon, Minto House, the seat of the chief of the Elliots, has long looked down on “bonnie Teviotdale.” Behind the house are two heathery hills, which may have remained much the same as they were a hundred years ago; but the nearest of the beautiful glens, which are now included in the pleasure-grounds, presented at that time no carefully-studied landscape gardening. Romantic as they are now, under the combined forces of art and nature, they were still more romantic in their original wildness of wood and water. The Minto craigs, at present shrouded in masses of wood, were at that time only clothed with broom and long grass.

Among other pleasant pictures of former days, there is a graphic picture of old Minto drawn by the present Countess of Minto :\*—

“But the Minto of those days was not the Minto of these. The sheet of water, which now reflects laburnums and rhododendrons in sight of the windows, was then a narrow burn running under banks shaggy with thorns. Where the flower-garden is now, there stood a dismal little church in a corner, dark with yews, and dreary with unkept graves. The manse, surrounded by a few untidy cottages, overlooked the little glen, and was near enough to the house for the minister to see the family as they sat at dinner in the round room on the ground-floor, known as ‘the big room’ by uncles and aunts, and as the schoolroom by the children of to-day. The rocks may have been finer than when no wood hung like drapery on their sides, but from the old castle one must have looked down on muirs and heaths, where now lie the woods of the Lamblairs, or the green slopes and corn-fields which smile in pleasant Teviotdale.”

\* “Memoir of the Right Honourable Hugh Elliot.”

“The green hills are possibly the only feature in the place which remain unchanged, though the village which clusters at their feet is new.” On sunny days there were “bright stretches of whins and heather, which have disappeared now.”

In 1727, Jean, the second daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, was born at Minto House. She was one of a family of sons and daughters; and, while the younger Gilbert was yet at home, before John went to sea, and Andrew to America, “the big room” must have been a blithe rendezvous of brothers and sisters—all the blither for those of them who were too reserved to take kindly to strangers.

The Elliots of Minto, like the Cockburns, gave great lawyers to the bar, and, like the Dalrymples and the Murrays, they lent statesmen to the Houses of Parliament. The Elliots, too, like the Lindsays, had a strong hereditary literary bent. Sir Gilbert, Jean’s father, along with Duncan Forbes of Culloden, was at the expense of publishing, in a small folio tract, what he believed to be the ancient ballad of Hardyknute,

which had been recovered from bits of paper on which clews of thread had been wound. These had been found by the research and the pains of Lady Wardlaw of Pitreavie, when she had leisure to make and follow out the discovery (that is, the invention) as young Elizabeth Halket, of Pitfer-rane.

Another Sir Gilbert, the Lord Justice's son, and the brother of Jean, was the author of a pastoral song in the style of Shenstone which was much admired in its time. It begins—

“My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep-hook,  
And all the gay haunts of my youth I forsook,”

and might have awakened the echoes of the Leasowes. So high was his reputation for judgment and taste, as well as for the purity of his English, that both Home's *Douglas* and Robertson's "Charles the Fifth" were submitted to him in MS. for his opinion and corrections. Dr. Somerville, when Sir Gilbert's parish minister (occupying that manse whose tenant could see the Minto family as they sat at dinner), was introduced at the house to

David Hume and Mrs. Montagu, Dr. Gregory and Lord Kaimes.

Jean Elliot was well educated, and it has been remembered that she was fond of French literature, while she lived long enough to express a characteristic detestation of the license and the riot of revolutionary France. There is no lingering testimony to her beauty in the family traditions ; but the slight particulars of her personal appearance which are handed down are in admirable accordance with what little traits are preserved of her character and disposition. She had "a sensible face, and a slender, well-shaped figure." It is also said that she was nice in all that related to cleanliness and neatness (a distinction in her day); and that, with the delicate moderation and maidenly shyness which belonged to her, she was scrupulous, even in advanced life, in accommodating her dress to the changes of fashion, so as not to be conspicuously peculiar, like many other old ladies. A family miniature represents her, in advanced years apparently, a little delicate old woman in close cap, ruffle, and ample

snowy neckerchief. She has the large nose and mouth which belong to an expressive rather than a beautiful face; but the mouth is kindly in its sagacity. Her eyebrows are well arched, and her eyes look lively under her sober head-dress.

Jean Elliot, from her youth, was remarkable for her discrimination, discretion, and self-control. One story tells that while yet a girl her father employed her to read his law papers, and with fatherly pride set store upon her comments. Another account relates that when Jean was a young woman of nineteen, in the year of the '45, a party of Jacobites came to Minto House in order to arrest that influential and dangerous Whig, Sir Gilbert. He had not received warning in time to convey himself farther than the Craigs, with their wide view and ruined watch-tower—one of the Scotch castles which bear the odd, incomprehensible name of Fat Lips. There he lay lurking among the broom and the fragments of rock, which had served as a refuge for nobler game than conies before then. Down at the house, in the commotion



and excitement of the trying moment, Jean either put herself forward to receive and entertain the unwelcome company, or else she was thrust into this difficult position by the other women, for she was neither house-dame nor eldest daughter. But she did it so well, with such simple courtesy and composure, that the enemy retired, under the impression that Sir Gilbert could not be within reach when the young lady, his daughter, was able to behave with perfect calmness and propriety.

Like her nieces in the next generation, Jean, as a girl, must have danced to the music of the bagpipes. She is certain also to have attended the Kelso races, which formed the gala of the year to Roxburgh, the Merse, the Forest, and Tweeddale. "The Northumberland and the Delavals from the south side" here at last met "the Buccleuchs, Douglasses, Kers, and Elliots," from the north side of the Border, in peace ; many of the men being accustomed to spend the three nights "dancing on tables and climbing up walls." In her youth Jean Elliot must often have sat or strolled upon the Nut-

bank, Ruberslaw, the Dunion, rambled down the Deneholm Dene, and climbed among the Minto craigs to Fat Lips Castle. Lighter moments these than those when her father, the grave Lord Justice, made it his refuge. And as both the castles of Fat Lips—that on Tinto as well as that on Minto—had their peculiar usage, that when visited by ladies and gentlemen in company, each gentleman was entitled to salute one lady on passing beneath the gateway, we may believe that Jean did not always escape this penalty—or privilege.

Jean grew up a quiet, reserved woman. She had no disposition to show her wit, and no taste for display. She had few temptations to swerve from a strict avoidance of exaggeration and extravagance in word or action. Though she was a greater aristocrat than Alison Cockburn, *noblesse oblige* took with her a nobler form than the necessity to shine. Deep down beneath this aristocratic element, and beneath all her constitutional reserve, was a sympathetic heart beating fervently in tune with the joys and the sorrows of humanity—sacred by reason of their com-

monness. To those who carefully study character, such a type is not so puzzling as it may seem at first. Still waters run deep; and it is where the channels are so contracted as to be hidden altogether that the concentration takes place which causes the waters to burst forth and carry all before them. It was the delicate, retiring daughter of a country clergyman who wrote the most genuinely passionate novel of her generation.

As the narrative runs, it was in 1756, the year when Lord Chatham, as William Pitt, first took office—the year when Admiral Byng was executed, and Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa entered on the Seven Years' War—that Miss Jean Elliot, “riding home after nightfall” in the family coach with her brother, Mr. Gilbert, had a certain conversation with him on the battle of Flodden, which had been so fatal to the men of the Forest, that the much later battle of Philiphaugh—fought actually within the Forest's bounds—had been comparatively forgotten.

The men of the town of Selkirk who an-

swered the call to Flodden were a hundred in number. The martial eye of King James was so delighted with these stalwart burghers that, previous to the battle, he knighted the town clerk, who led his fellow-townsmen. The burghers of Selkirk are still in possession of a banner—a veritable English banner of green silk, with armorial bearings—which was taken from a doughty English captain by a Selkirk man named Fletcher, and brought home, although not in triumph, by its captor. Surviving the fatal battle, as well as the scouring of the country by the English afterwards, this Fletcher presented his trophy to his own corporation of weavers, and in their keeping it has remained, flourishing periodically in the Selkirk ceremony of “the Riding of the Common.” A sadder memorial of Flodden is said to exist in the arms of the county town of this portion of the Forest. The representation of a woman and child, to be seen there, is supposed to refer to a legend that the corpse of a woman, wife to one of the hundred, was found, with a living child at her breast, lying by

the Ladywood Edge, when the remnant of the expedition returned, stricken and sorrowful, from the lost battle.

When Mr. Gilbert Elliot and his sister held that memorable conversation, she was a thoughtful woman, past the period of youth when the heart is engrossed by its own hopes and fears—its own sweetness and bitterness. She was twenty-eight years of age.

Speech had sunk into silence, Gilbert, man-like, had chosen to relieve the sober philanthropy and antiquarianism, the romantic dreariness, as one may say, of the topic, by giving it a sudden practical turn. He laid a wager of a pair of gloves or a set of ribbons that his sister Jean could not write a ballad on Flodden.

Now Mr. Gilbert was a song-writer himself, and a song-writer of no “small graith;” and his sister Jean, although she might demur at admitting, even to her own brother, that she was a writer, was a sympathetic woman and a genius.

Yielding to the influence of the moment, Jean accepted the challenge. Leaning back in her corner, with all the most mournful stories of

the country-side for her inspiration, and two lines of an old ballad, which had often rung in her ears and trembled on her lips, for a foundation, she planned and constructed the rude framework of her "Flowers of the Forest." Afterwards the song was duly and correctly written down.

Having thus fulfilled the terms and won the wager, Jean Elliot went on the even tenor of her way, and took no further trouble in the matter, beyond doing her best to keep her family and friends silent, as she was herself, on the subject of her authorship.

The example of Lady Wardlaw of Pitreavie, who, with that ingenious tale of hers regarding the clews of thread, had imposed on two great lawyers, might serve as a model of secrecy. But, with an instinctively loyal and grateful recognition of what she had been able to do, Jean Elliot did not think of suppressing her work or limiting its circulation. As an old ballad recovered and revived, the song speedily got into print, and spread far and near like a flash of lightning.



In 1760 there was more to think of and to be proud of in the estimation of the family at Minto than the singing of a song, old or new.

While the heir, Mr. Gilbert, ambitious and industrious, was making a figure in the House of Commons, Captain John greatly distinguished himself by the capture of "the pigmy fleet" of M. Thurot. In command of three privateers, Thurot had made previous descents on the coasts of Scotland and England, and burnt two English ships. Captain Elliot came up with him in the Channel, and, with half the number of the Frenchman's crew, boarded the French vessel. In the fight which followed, Thurot was killed. The three privateers were taken, and towed by their captor to the Isle of Man.

Even Horace Walpole, more given to chronicle scandal than to credit excess of merit in any line, takes note not only of the gallantry, but of the modesty of John Elliot.

One of the French cannon thus taken was brought to Minto. The old Lord Justice received and preserved a letter from his bailiff, in which the servant expresses the pride of



every man and woman of the clan that had been wont to spring up in ready response to the old stirring challenge—

“My name is little Jock Elliot,  
An’ wha daur meddle with me ?”

in the fact of the Lord Justice’s having two such promising sons. And the name of a third might have been added. Andrew Elliot had crossed the Atlantic, had made a fortune, and was preparing to settle on a fine place near New York whilst it was still the capital of an English colony. He married twice there (his second wife having been an old flame of George Washington’s), and had several daughters born to him. In the general rejoicings at Minto, when bonfires surely blazed on the Dunion and Ruberslaw, and Thurot’s cannon, planted on such a smooth green site as that of Mount Teviot, fired a volley in honour of John Elliot, it seemed a very simple and natural arrangement that one of the happy sisters of the hero, sharing in full her brother’s modesty, should slip out of sight in her individual achievement.

Old Sir Gilbert, Jean’s father, died not long

afterwards. His daughter-in-law has preserved some of the circumstances of his death by quoting the lines which her husband had written on the melancholy occasion, as being curiously applicable to the details of his own death, some twelve or fourteen years later:—

“His mind refined and strong, no sense impaired,  
Nor feeling of humanity, nor taste  
Of social life, so e’en his latest hour  
In sweet domestic cheerfulness was passed;  
Sublimely calm his ripened spirit fled,  
His family surrounding and his friends;  
A wife and daughter closed his eyes; on them  
Was turned his latest gaze; and o’er his grave—  
Their father’s grave—his sons the green turf spread.”

When young Sir Gilbert (leaving “the affairs of the State”) ruled in his turn at Minto, Jean went with her mother and family to Edinburgh. She lived for a number of years, leading the same quiet home life as she had led at Minto. She was no queen of society, and was far outshone in social qualities by Alison Cockburn. But her power made its impression in her own circle. Regarding the two ladies of the Forest in the light of authoresses, indeed, posterity has

somewhat reversed the judgment of their own contemporaries.

The Edinburgh to which Jean Elliot went had already lost much of its old feudal romance, but it was still very different from the Edinburgh of to-day. The North Bridge was just built; the South Bridge was not begun. The district including Crichton Street, where Mrs. Cockburn latterly lived, and George's Square, where Sir Walter Scott was born, was still lying in fields and orchards. The Mound was not begun. Two stage-coaches ran to Leith every hour, and one to London once a month. Lord Kaimes and Dr. Robertson represented the resident literati. No such thing as an umbrella had been seen in the streets. Vegetables were brought chiefly from Musselburgh by women who carried them in *creels* on their backs. In a dearth of fruit for dessert at the dinner-tables of the principal men in Edinburgh, an English traveller remarked that dishes of small raw turnips—called “neeps” by the natives—were eaten with avidity. Two o'clock was the universal dinner-hour, and tradesmen often

shut their shops from one till two. Gentle-men were in the habit of visiting ladies in their drawing-rooms to enjoy their society, and drink "dishes" of tea, in the afternoons. There was one dancing assembly-room, where minuets and country dances were danced in a succession of sets before the Lady Directress. The company met at five o'clock; the dancing began at six and ended at eleven by public orders, which were never transgressed. In the old theatre, which was decorated with painted heads of the poets and with Runciman's landscapes, Mr. Digges, the lessee, was his own great tragedian and comedian alike, being equally great in Cato and Sir John Brute.

Miss Jean's brother and his family made their head-quarters in London or near it. They did not settle long anywhere, and lived little at Minto. Lady Elliot Murray, brilliant, demonstrative, and vehement as she shows herself in the pages of her descendant, could have had little sympathy with her sister-in-law. Those of her children who were least like their mother, and were least her favourites in the beginning,

came nearest to their aunt Jean. Calm, grave Gilbert and unaffected Eleanor must have been Miss Jean's pets, and not the mother's idols, the impulsive diplomatist Hugh, and the dissatisfied beauty Isabella.

In 1766 the two boys, the elder nephews, returned from Paris, where they had resided with their tutor, Mr. Liston, and under the protection of David Hume, who comes out in these letters as a friendly, travelled old bachelor. The young Elliots were this year domiciled in Edinburgh, renewing their studies, preserving their Parisian perfection in fencing and dancing, and dining on a Sunday with their grandmother and aunts. If any one was likely to feel secret leniency towards steady Gilbert in that slightest of scrapes, when he was tempted by a young lady to take to Thomson's "Seasons" instead of to Roman history, was it not his aunt Jean?

In 1772, Lady Elliot Murray, who had been at Minto in the autumn for the Kelso races, visited the Dowager Lady Elliot in Edinburgh. In one of her letters "of thirteen pages long" she thus

characteristically comments on a portion of the society:—

“The misses are, I am afraid, the most rotten part of the society. Envy and jealousy of their rivals have, I fear, a possession in their minds, especially the old part of the young ladies, who grow perfect beldames in that small society; but upon the whole,” she adds, with a little relenting, “there are many worthy, agreeable, well-principled people, *if you get over the language, manners, and address, which are at first striking.*”

This opinion from a Forfar and Fife heiress is in itself decidedly striking. In opposition to Lady Elliot Murray’s verdict, we have had proof, in Mrs. Cockburn’s letters, that the set of women—Mrs. Chalmers, Tib Hall, Jenny Duff, Violy Pringle, not to speak of the eccentric Suff Johnstone—in which Mrs. Cockburn mingled at this very date, were clever and kind-hearted. We have also an impartial witness in an English traveller who, writing from Edinburgh in 1777, praises the superior conversational powers of the women, and dwells on the pleasant effect



produced on a stranger by their easy, cordial address, and their manner of saying, in the earlier stages of acquaintance, "My dear sir," and "My good friend."

In 1773 Jean Elliot's mother died. 1776-7-8 were years of trouble and change to her remaining kindred. Eleanor Elliot, the younger niece, married Mr. Eden. Gilbert, the future head of the house, married a lady of French Huguenot extraction, who, to the comical disgust of his mother, added to that disadvantage the absence of personal beauty. Lady Elliot Murray described a similar choice on the part of another eccentric victim as "a mad marriage to a frightful, long-nosed, awkward woman, *who has nevertheless douceur, virtue, and amiability to recommend her, and a love to him as strong as it is romantic;*" and she consistently bemoaned her son's "unnatural passion for an ugly woman." She had soon graver subjects of lamentation. Sir Gilbert Elliot caught cold, fell into a rapid decline, went abroad, and died in 1777. His youngest son, the "Alick" of the family letters, died in India in 1778; and in the same year



young Mrs. Eden was forced to leave her baby with her mother, and accompany her husband to America. She went out, in her uncle Captain John's ship, at the time that the discontent of the colonists was about to break out in the American war. A nation's independence was secured by it; but many a fine fortune was scattered to the winds, many a fine place was ruined, and among others Andrew Elliot's. Spent by her trials, by anxiety for Hugh's prosperity in foreign courts, and by disappointment in Isabella's wasted life, Lady Elliot Murray died in 1779. Her sister-in-law, Miss Jean, was then a maiden lady of fifty-one years of age.

But the good fortune of the Elliots of that generation had not deserted them. True-hearted Gilbert was the stay of the mother, who came to know him at last, as well as of his entire family; and the genuine goodness of his French wife, who conceived at first sight a strong attachment for her husband's country home of Minto, and who danced with equal goodwill at the Jedburgh ball and among the colliers of Lochgelly, overcame all hostility and

gained every heart. Mrs. Eden's husband also secured for her much happiness, at the same time that he won for himself the public honours which founded the barony of Auckland. Among the Edens the Christian name of Eleanor (the niece of the author of "The Flowers of the Forest"), no less than the literary bent of the Elliot family, may yet be found. Even Andrew Elliot flourished again in his daughters, the American nieces of Miss Jean, who married amidst the hearty congratulations of their kindred. The first [when New York was still held by the English] married Lord Cathcart; a second married Sir David Carnegie of Southesk [thus connecting the Elliots twice in that generation with the Balcarres Lindsays]; and a third—the eldest—at a time when her waning attractions seemed to have filled her friends with a reasonable doubt of her "settling" at all, married her uncle John's gallant naval contemporary, Admiral Digby.

But successes which must have come more home to the spinster sisters in Edinburgh were

the fresh laurels gathered by their brave brother John. In 1778 he was a commodore, and second in command to Lord Howe. John Elliot distinguished himself in Rodney's victory off St. Vincent in 1780, and again in Admiral Kempenfelt's battle with the French fleet off Brest in 1781. In this latter action, John Elliot's ship, the *Edgar*, which was the leading ship in position, was shot at for half an hour by the *Triumphant*, a three-decker. At last the *Edgar* by a manœuvre avoided being raked by the *Triumphant*, receiving a broadside on its bows, while it poured a broadside in return, and disabled the *Triumphant*. The Elliots, like the Keppels, have an hereditary right to be sailors.

Miss Jean occupied a house in Brown Square when death had left her a solitary householder. The circumstances of her position were very much like those which surrounded Mrs. Cockburn. But Miss Jean craved retirement and quietness, and eschewed the gayer scenes of Edinburgh. The *ridottos* which the Scotch clergy permitted, though they set their faces

against masquerades, were not patronised by her; nor the whimsical oyster cellars, where the leaders of fashion in the northern capital imitated the grand dames of Paris in pretending to the license of men—a comparatively innocent license in this instance, however adverse it might have been to feminine delicacy. Certain it is, however, that Miss Jean would take her drive with a friend in her coach, backwards and forwards, on Leith or Edinburgh sands. It is not improbable that the authors of both sets of “The Flowers of the Forest” went and heard the lectures on elocution which were delivered by Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s father, and which were attended by many of the first ladies and gentlemen in Edinburgh. Of a Sunday Miss Jean might sit, listening to the carefully-polished periods of Dr. Hugh Blair, in the High Kirk; or in old Greyfriars, trying to weigh the hard logic of Dr. Erskine. If Miss Jean sat in the latter kirk, then a noticeable little fellow formed, along with her, one of the congregation. In a seat crammed with eight or ten children at a time, besides father and

mother, was a little lame boy, who was yet to make Dr. Erskine preach, not to Guy Man-  
nering and Councillor Pleydell alone, but to  
the civilised world. And when George White-  
field came down on his later visits to Scotland,  
after having broken with the seceders and come  
into favour with the established clergy, it is  
not at all unlikely that the representative of  
the Roxburgh Elliots, on the invitation of a  
Galloway Maxwell, Lady Glenorchy, was pre-  
sent at some of his marvellous preachings.

But through all varying scenes and fashions,  
the wise dislike to notoriety kept Jean Elliot  
safe from folly and censure. Discreet as she  
had been in the girl's open, flowing, big-flowered  
lutestring and gossamer "mob," in the '45, so  
was she in the old woman's tight "seeded" silk  
gown and close cap, in Brown Square in 1804;  
for she survived the moral and social earthquake  
of the French Revolution, the guillotining of the  
Bourbons, the going out of wigs and cocked-  
hats. She remained always on a well-bred,  
accommodating level with her generation. But  
there was a single departure from her practice.

She was the last woman in Edinburgh who, after the era of the fly, kept standing in her "lobby" a private sedan-chair, in which she was borne abroad by the last of the caddies when she wanted to take an airing or to make a call. Perhaps, at the last, she stood aghast at the enormous encroachments on old usages which had been compassed in her days.

Jean Elliot stole back in the end to the region of the Forest to see again its bracken, and hear once more its waters and the bleat of its sheep. She died either at Minto or at Mount Teviot, the house of her younger brother, Admiral Elliot (accounts differ), on the 29th of March, 1805, aged seventy-eight years.

"I've heard them lilting" was brought home, beyond mistake, to Jean Elliot's door, by Mr. Ramsay of Ochertyre, Sir Walter Scott, and Dr. Somerville. And now who dare praise that "Flowers of the Forest?" It is simply beyond praise. Suffice it to say that the song is supposed to be sung by young girls, who are almost too young to have entered into the piteously familiar misery, and who have grown



a little weary under its crushing, never-lifted load; or else by very old women, who have waxed into mere spectatresses of the struggle of life, viewing it with the impatience of the old, whose eyes will soon be closed and whose ears will soon be dulled to all natural gladness, who think life too short for prolonged mourning. It is needless to point out the succession of perfectly contrasted and incomparably tender rural pictures.

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### THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST.

I've heard them lilting at our yowe-milking,  
Lasses a' lilting before the dawn o' day;  
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—  
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At buchts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,  
The lasses are lonely and dowie and wae;  
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,  
Ilk ane lifts her leglin, and hies her away.



In hairst, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,  
The bandsters are lyart and runkled and gray ;  
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching,—  
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming  
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play ;  
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie,—  
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dule and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border  
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day ;  
The Flowers of the Forest, that focht aye the foremost.  
The prime o' our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at the yowe-milking,  
Women and bairns are heartless and wae ;  
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—  
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

## MISS SUSANNA BLAMIRE.

1747—1794.

THE manor farm of Thackwood is situated in a district of Cumberland which is rich in many ways. The landscape is that of hill and dale, yellow corn-field, purple moor, and masses of magnificent green oaks and sycamores growing by the river Caldew. Helvellyn towers over all in uncorruptible majesty. From a height in a neighbouring parish, the Solway Frith and the Scotch hills are seen, as well as Crossfell, Patterdale, Skiddaw, and Carnack. It is a landscape literally studded with massive grey manor farm-houses, with rugged and lordly Border castles, and with the rich relics of abbeys, priories, and nunneries. The whole is crowned by the bishop's palace of Rose Castle, and the cathedral of the merry town of Carlisle.

The ground abounds in the foot-marks of different races, the brands of old struggles between rival nations long united, and half-forgotten feudal factions. Rude British forts are here, and Druidical circles, and rings which look like circles. Here, too, are Roman camps, with their tokens of disciplined skill and the imperial patience and labour of Roman walls. At Rose Castle, Edward the Hammer of the Scots held a Parliament. At Thorsby, which was a Danish colony named after their Thunder God, David, the sore saint for the crown of Scotland, strove, by building a Christian church, to bury out of sight Thorsby's heathen foundation. Howards, Grahams, Dacres, and Musgraves rode in this quarter red-handed. They toppled down each other's battlemented towers, or lit the faggots beneath the oaken beams. The character of the people was wont to be as marked and varied, as bold and wild, as hard and tender, as their country. Nowhere else in "canny auld Cumberland" were there men of more original temper, more stubborn will, or shrewder sagacity and thought. But it was all welded with rough

bounty and hospitality. There was blue blood in yeomen's veins in these dales. Ancient lineage was not less proudly and jealously preserved that its holders were plain men who guided their ploughs with their own hands, and mingled freely with their hinds, not only at church and market, at sales and burials, but at more private feasts. Manners were deeply rutted in, and the tracks were long of being worn out in these remote and isolated fields. Order and law waxed grim in their integrity, or independence became license, and license brutality.

Not much of the license and brutality crossed the innocent maiden path of the robust dalesmen's pet, Miss Blamire. But the cordial freedom, the hearty kindness, the humorous "thrawnness," the deep tenderness often hid under the unhewn rock of the outer man, like the moss in the rough channels of their becks, entered into her very soul.

Susanna Blamire was a daughter of an ancient yeoman family of Cumberland, not the least distinguished or the least worthy of that stout

class. She was born at Cardew Hall (one of those square, absolutely hoary old farmsteads) in January, 1747, exactly twenty-three years before William Wordsworth. As yet the associations which have so intimately linked Cumberland and Westmoreland and their lakes with Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Wilson, and De Quincey, had all to be formed. On the loss of her mother in early childhood, Susanna Blamire was adopted by an aunt. This was Aunt Simpson,—all the dale's Aunt Simpson,—a middle-aged widow with lands in her own right. She was a splendid specimen of the practical, sharp-witted, yet open-handed and loving-hearted daleswoman. By her Susanna was reared to womanhood. A tradition remains of her, that on her parlour table she kept three bowls standing with her ready money,—gold, silver, and copper,—to let her know how much she had to spend, and to enable her to relieve on the spot any daleswoman seeking her help. One may add that it was a remarkable proof of the honesty of her household, and of the discretion even of its youngest

people, when they could be deputed to meet the claims of Aunt Simpson's household, and trusted to supply their own wants in dress and pocket-money, out of these ever-ready bowls.

Little Sukey of Cumberland was also fortunate in another respect. She was not left alone with a childless and dogmatic aunt. Two brothers and a sister bore her company, having been transferred with herself to Thackwood on the occasion of her father's second marriage, and in deference to Aunt Simpson's plain-spoken prejudice against stepmothers.

The old house of Thackwood Nook is minutely described by Dr. Lonsdale in connection with William Blamire, Susanna's nephew, who, long after her death, flourished as one of the "worthies" of Cumberland. It is still a characteristic house, with its irregular out-buildings and its forest trees close at hand. It is low-browed in its two stories, with heavy mullioned windows, and a rough-cast, whitewashed front. The carriage-drive and lawn end in a weather-stained, flagged walk, which is edged with sweet musk, and bordered by grizzly yews and

gaunt thorns. Rising high above the rest, and shading the house far and wide, are one or two gnarled, lichen-grown oaks. Except the everlasting hills, not another material object save these oaks would have served to make the hoary farm-house of Thackwood look by comparison a modern dwelling.

Susanna and her brothers and sister walked in mud and mire a mile's distance to Raughton Head, where at a village school they were taught, with the rest of the dale, at the small fee of a shilling a quarter from each scholar.

If this was the school of which Susanna Blamire afterwards drew a picture at the dinner hour, when the children from a distance were unfolding their wooden trenchers, with their Cumberland pies, oaten cakes, and tin flasks of milk, then it was a dame school, and the old scholar adds a pretty sketch of the learned school-dame :—

“ And now the dame in neat white mob is seen,  
Her russet gown, silk kerchief, apron clean ;  
At the school door her tremulous voice is heard,  
And the blythe game's unwillingly deferred.”



If the way from Thackwood to the school was rough for the children, it had enough of living interest in bank and beck to feed young hearts and brains. What with humble bees, dragon-flies, and trout, coral berries of the mountain ash, ruby haws, and blood-stones of brambles, there were treasures enough to tempt the truant. There was a bridge across the brawling stream, half hidden among woodbine and sweet-brier, where little feet loved to tarry, in order that their owners might swing on its railing and watch the foaming water. There was a mill which possessed inexhaustible attractions, with its friendly "clack," its dusty miller resting against one leaf of its wide door, its white sacks nearly toppling over, its chicks in the road, and its ducklings in the pond. There were lovely bits of romantic woodland, and hill-country scenes of beauty never to be forgotten, but to be remembered faithfully in night-watches on board ship, at a town desk, in a Highland home, or on a sick-bed ; and songs of missel-thrush and ring-dove fit to tune the throat of incipient songstresses like themselves.

The studies at the village school were exceedingly circumscribed; but Susanna Blamire made the most of them—more, indeed, than is often made of a college curriculum. She was a diligent reader, wrote a fair round hand, and to these branches added painting and music. For the last she had such love and such taste, that she taught herself to play passing well on the guitar, which was then the sweet tinkling instrument of rustic belles, before the rattle of harpsichord and spinet was common in country places. She could charm herself and her neighbours by her music, an end not always attained by the elaborate and noisy musicians of the present day. But it was in the sister art of dancing that she most excelled. Miss Sukey was the ravishing dancer of the country-side. With her dancing was a passion, an inspiration, and it was engaged in, in the open air, among the warping grass and ling, by the dusty highway, and to the accompaniment of a travelling piper blowing on his pipes. She was as much filled and fired with the necessity of contributing to the general joy of the natural world as ever was gipsy

maiden in a Spanish market-place. And this is no fancy picture. It is told of her that on one occasion she leaped from the pony on which she was riding ; and, letting it wander at will among the harebells, bade the chance piper play “a spring,” and encouraged him by dancing in pure blitheness because the world was fair and she was young, and her sensitive ear and supple limbs had to offer their own donation to the beauty and excellence of existence. Happily for Miss Sukey, there was no excited crowd, no malicious gossip, no deadly hostile Prior to punish her in the deed. There was only the poor gratified piper, the phlegmatic shaggy pony, and perhaps a motherly cow raising her head while she continued to chew her cud in a neighbouring field, or a curious lambkin, accustomed also to dance, in season and out of season, peering over the ridge of the first boulder. Even had any of Sukey’s countrymen and countrywomen chanced to spy her at that rash moment, there would have been no proud princess’s degradation ; it would only have been spoken of as a freak of the “bonnie

and varra lish lass" who was so much one of themselves.

Of the printed books which Susanna Blamire read, few could have lent help to her particular genius. Ballads were out of fashion; Dr. Percy and young Walter Scott had not yet revived them. But the retentive memories and unchanging habits of old Cumberland preserved traditions and legends manifold. Dwelling in the very places, and surrounded by the very people among whom the lively incidents of the old tales had happened, Susanna must have grown up in familiarity with "Hughie the Græme," "Kinmont Willie," and especially with "Carlisle Yetts." Only two years before she was born, the flames of the last unhappy rebellion were quenched in blood. Many persons in Cumberland must still have remembered the passage to and fro, under such widely different auspices, of Prince Charles's army of wild Highlanders and disaffected Lowlanders. Old women would tell the sympathetic girl the marvellous story of the traitor's head with long, soiled, yellow locks raised on a cruel pike, and of the

fond, miserable woman who came a great distance to gaze on it, at sunrise and at sunset. Such stories could not but have had their influence on the girl's plastic mind, notwithstanding that the true men and women of the dales were too canny and sagacious to go in largely for the Jacobites. Nor was that what we call a romantic age. There is, after all, little trace of the fascination of old romance on Susanna Blamire's mind, though romance was latent there. Her mind was simply receptive, crystal clear in its shallows, and calculated to reflect its own age truthfully and tenderly. The songs for which Cumberland is famous, and to which Susanna Blamire was to contribute her quota, were then beginning to be heard, and it may be credited that Susanna took more to the songs than to the ballads.

These songs in the vernacular are very peculiar and very graphic. They are shrewd, waggish, or woeful. They are full of strong individual character and high local colouring, and abound with allusions to rites, sports, and sayings which flourish in Cumberland, and in

Cumberland alone. They dwell emphatically on qualities which hardly reveal themselves in the natives of other districts of England. In these Cumberland songs there are to be found a vigorous independence on the part of the men and an arch coyness on the part of the women—above all, a *patkiness* and a *gauciness*, to borrow two untranslatable Scotch words, which are generally held to abide on the Scotch side of the Border, and to be out of keeping with frank, dutiful English human nature. Withal, there are in these songs deep glistening wells of tenderness, and enduring rocks of constancy. The very titles of some of them convey a world of meaning. How expressive are these: “I trudged up to Lon’on through thick and through thin,” “The Bridewain,” “The Diel gae wi’ them that fashes wi’ me,” “This love sae breaks a body’s rest,” “Croghie Watty,” “Lal Dinah Greyson,” “A Lockerbye Lick,” and “The Village Gang!” In two lights these songs are like Mr. Barnes’s Dorsetshire songs, but in two only. Their simplicity is so entire that it is very quaint, and the piteousness of the lamentation put into



the mouths of the one-idea'd sufferers is unsurpassable. There is no doubt that Susanna Blamire dearly loved that earlier strata of Cumberland songs, and learned much from them. But when she lived in the centre of Cumberland human nature, rich and characteristic to an extent that is difficult for her successors, even understanding the freedom of manners of the past century, to measure, she scarcely needed the songs.

The primitive yeoman gentry of Cumberland fearlessly visited high and low, ate at the tables of peasants as well as of nobles, and sat down at the lowliest hearth as well as in the lordliest chimney corner.

It is recorded of Miss Sukey, whose gaiety of heart was exuberant, that in all the dales there was not such a lass for attending "merry meets" and "upshots." At these entertainments the company were divided, by the rule of three, into drinkers (without apology), carders, and dancers. The dancers danced under the bare joists of the long loft which formed the upper story of many of the farm-



houses; the drinkers drank across the deal boards of the clay-floored kitchen; while the carders played cards in the bower, or principal sleeping-room of the family that gave the entertainment. Miss Sukey Blamire most enjoyed taking her part in the dance, whether it were "Cross the Buckle" or "Bonny Bell," choosing her partner from among the farm labourers and country servants, most of whom had been her school companions. She ate and drank of the bread and cheese and ale, which, with the "towering pies" and huge apple-tarts, were the potent heavy refreshments of the "merry meets." She strolled into the bower, and looked on at "Popps and Pairs," "Showart Trump," "Whisk," or "Auld ane-and-thirty." She raised her clear voice with the rest of the company in the chorus of the roaring ditties of "Tom Linton" and "Dick Waters." Cumberland ladies did so without losing a grain of their prestige, without contracting the shadow of a stain on their womanliness, and at a time when their backs were no sooner turned than the mirth was apt to grow riot, and the feasting

debauchery. Cumberland clownishness sometimes became irreverent barbarism, as when, in later days, Susanna Blamire's nephew William went to hear a sermon from a curate who was in disgrace with his bishop for intemperance, he found the priest officiating in clogs, and without stockings.

Susanna Blamire won golden opinions from a country-side for the restraining presence of her gracious geniality—so genial that when she died the impulsive protest burst from the lips of an old farmer of her acquaintance, "The merry meets will not be worth going to now, since she is no more."

In such company Susanna Blamire might well gather the substance of the stiff argument embodied in her political song, "Why, Ned, man, thou look'st so down-hearted;" and quick ears might catch the first vixenish mutterings of the storm which she and her friend, Miss Gilpin, afterwards heard in its full fury, and worked up jointly in their grotesque "Cumberland Scold."

Susanna Blamire reached by keen observation what Lady Nairne arrived at instinctively.

As a result which might be looked for from the two processes, Lady Nairne's studies of ploughmen, fish-wives, and gude-wives have more of the large framework of common humanity, are more delicate and idealised; while Susanna Blamire's are narrower, and more literal.

It is a puzzle to decide when Susanna Blamire began to write. It is said, indeed, that her first effort dates as early as her nineteenth year. But at what times her different songs were written we have no proper means of judging, since none were published either during her own life or during the lives of her near relations. She did not put her name to any of those which did get into print through the columns of newspapers and in collections of songs, nor did she have any craving to win literary reputation, though neither had she Lady Nairne's morbid and excessive shrinking from being recognised as an authoress. But certainly Susanna Blamire's essays in writing were not the forced growth of her friends' favourable opinion and encouragement. Her elder brother,

the naval surgeon, was the hard-working member of a hard-working profession, which he practised for science and for charity's sake from the day that he left the navy, yet to such good purpose that Lord Vernon came down from London to Cumberland in order to avail himself of Dr. Blamire's skill. Dr. Blamire, thus brought into constant contact with the stern realities of life, had a good-humoured, but short-sighted, contempt for a poetess's visions, and for the frittering away of time in stringing together rhymes which appeared equally idle, whether bombastic or nonsensical. Yet this matter-of-fact surgeon and yeoman squire of the Hollows could be so inconsistent as to marry one of the most accomplished Cumberland spinsters, for whose gifts and superior cultivation his sister Sukey entertained a generously ardent admiration. In his bachelor days the doctor had patient indulgence with Susanna's irrepressible spirit and blitheness. He was wont to declare that all the young officers, his messmates of the quarter-deck and cockpit, were dull and phlegmatic compared with his sister

Sukey. Perhaps one reason for his forbearance was simply that he had no wish that the gay young sister should run off at a tangent as an erratic authoress. Nor did active Aunt Simpson give her niece any countenance in her favourite pursuit. Doubtless the old lady held that too much brains in a woman would spoil her prospects in marriage. But these were spoilt betimes in another way. In the recklessly indiscriminate visiting of Cumberland, Susanna, with her unique fascination, was so unfortunate as to take the fancy of the son of a noble house, whether while at Chillingham, where she resided for a short space with the family of the Earl of Tankerville and was made a pet of by the Earl, or in some other equally ineligible quarter, is not precisely known. But at all events, her fancy was taken in turn by the young nobleman who, with becoming surroundings, had enough manliness to value her as she deserved. It need not be said that the lover's family did not approve of his choice, and that he was induced by their representations to break off the connection.

Poor Sukey! After singing so modestly, so winningly,

“What ails this heart o’ mine?”

to be compelled to sing and dance on in another and more bitter experience, a personal application of Grisell Baillie’s plaintive, restive cry,—

“Werena my heart licht I wad dee!”

Poorer young nobleman! Having loved a woman neither very fair, nor rich, nor high-born, nor the fashion, he was tempted to give her up, remain a bachelor or become a Benedict to another Beatrice, with the consciousness that Susanna Blamire’s qualities were simply such as he could never meet with again, and his passion what he could not hope to transfer to another by any spell of obedience or expediency. For Susanna Blamire might have written of herself, and of him who, in spite of his accidental advantages, ought to have been her bridegroom, what she wrote in her “Auld Robin Forbes,” which Mary Russell Mitford, no mean judge of poetry, called “eminently successful:”—



“ The lasses a’ wondered what Willy could see  
 In yen that was dark and hard-featured like me ;  
*And they wondered aye mair when they talk’d o’ my test,*  
*And sllly tell’t Willy that couldna be it.*  
 But Willy he laugh’d, and he made me his weyfe,  
 And wha was mair happy thro’ a’ his lang leyfe ?  
 It’s e’en my great comfort now Willy is gane,  
 That he often said nae place was leyke his ain beame.

\* \* \* \*

“ He would fling me a daisy to put in my breast,  
 And I hammered my noddle to mak out a jest ;  
 But merry or grave, Willy often would tell  
*There was neane o’ the lave was leyke my ain sel’.*  
 And he spak what he thought, for I’d hardly a plack  
 When we married, and nobbet ae gown to my back.”

Judging from her portrait, and from descriptions which are extant of the person of Sukey Blamire (whose sister Sarah was one of the greatest beauties in Cumberland), we gather that she was slightly marked with small-pox, but not so much as to disfigure her features or mar her complexion. She had berry-brown hair, of which she professed to be very vain. She wore it thrown back from her high forehead, and hanging down on her shoulders in a long roll, formed of one thick curl, disposed with studied negligence somewhat in the style of the present



day. Her nose was large, and too *prononcé*, but her mouth was very sweet in its firmness, and her eyes and brows were fine. She was tall and slender, with a shapely neck, bust, and shoulders. Her dress (in the portrait) is a marvel of simple elegance. The body of the gown is cut square and low, with a full white edging round the bosom. A single rose is worn at one side.

Susanna Blamire's much-loved sister Sarah married, while yet young, a Scotch laird, Colonel Graham of Duchray and Ardoch; and Susanna went with the couple to stay in their house in Scotland. In her change of home she found only a change of friends and of beautiful landscape; for Colonel Graham's property was situated on Loch Ard, near Monteith and Aberfoyle, in that district of the middle Highlands of Stirling and Perthshire which is only second to the Trosachs in mingled wildness and softness. What Susanna knew of the gills, pikes, meres, and forces of her own lake-land was reproduced to her still more charmingly in Scotland; and Susanna loved Scotland. Like a

true woman of the North countrie, she had always had leanings to the land beyond the Border. She knew by heart Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," and had put "Auld Robin Gray" into the mouth of a Cumberland milk-maid while it was yet fresh from Lady Anne Lindsay's closet at Balcarres. Susanna adopted Scotland and the Scotch with enthusiasm, and thenceforth wrote Scotch songs like a Scotchwoman. She was inspired to make the trial by the songs of Burns, then in his zenith, and of Tannahill in his weaver's home in Paisley. None could have relished these songs more than Susanna Blamire, with her Cumberland *furor* wherever song was concerned, and her own genius as a lyricist. The effect of these songs on her style is evident. But owing to her indifference to literary interests in themselves, and her remaining outside of every literary coterie in Edinburgh and elsewhere, she does not in any of her letters and poetical epistles even mention the name of Burns.

With the Grahams, Susanna took trips to Ireland and to London; and these trips were

pleasant interludes in her quiet, but bright life. Wherever she travelled, it was in the happy obscurity and irresponsibility which belonged to the part of Mrs. Graham's sister, the young lady in the little family party. Most likely her great objects of curiosity and enjoyment in London were those of any other country woman—St. Paul's, the parks, the palaces, Vauxhall, and the theatres. Her vivid apprehension of character, and her sympathy with dramatic truth, she has herself chronicled in her whimsical account of the wonders worked by a strolling company in her own village of Stockleworth:—

“Then down-the-brow Wully tuck up his coat lappet,  
And held't till his een, for he's given to jeer;  
But I had it frae yen that was even forment him,  
'Twas weel for his sel' that his coat lappet was near.  
Oh! *Venus Preserved* was the name o' the actin',  
And Jaffer was him had the beautiful wife;  
Tho' I gowl'd a' the tyme, it's a worry to tell on't,  
I never was hawf sae well pleased in my life.”

Mrs. Graham's husband died six years after their marriage. She had no family, and she seems to have returned with Susanna to Cumberland, where the two lived again with Aunt

Simpson at Thackwood until Aunt Simpson's death, twelve years later. The sisters then continued to reside at Thackwood in summer, and in Carlisle in winter.

Susanna, in her writings, gives occasional glimpses of the pleasantly monotonous life at Thackwood. In her lively doggerel she makes record for the benefit of absent friends :—

“ At eight I rise—a decent time,  
But aunt would say 'tis oftener nine.  
I come down-stairs, the cocoa's ready,  
For you must know I've turned fine lady.

“ When breakfast's done I take a walk,  
Where English girls their secrets talk ;  
Often my circuit's round the garden,  
In which there's no flower worth a farthing.

“ I sit me down and work \* awhile,  
But here I think I see you smile :  
' At work,' quoth you,—' but little's done,  
' Thou lik'st too well a bit of fun.'

“ At twelve I dress my head † so smart,  
Were there a man he'd lose his heart ;  
My hair has turned the loveliest brown,  
There's no such hair in London Town.

\* The work was often spinning.

† Miss Sukey from her childhood would figure in a mob-cap of a morning.

“ At one the cloth is constant laid  
By little Fan, our pretty maid;  
She’s prettier much than her young lady,  
But that you know full easily may be.

“ After I’ve dined maybe I read,  
Or write to favourites ’cross the Tweed,  
Then work till tea, then walk again,  
If it does neither snow nor rain.

“ If e’er my spirits want a flow,  
Up-stairs I run to my bureau,  
And get your letters—read them over,  
With all the fondness of a lover.

“ But stop ! my journal’s nearly done,  
Through the whole day ’tis almost run ;  
I think I’d sipped my tea nigh up—  
O yes ! I’m sure I drank my cup.

“ I work till supper, after that  
I play or sing, maybe we chat;  
At ten we always go to bed,  
And thus my life I’ve calmly led.

“ Since my return, as Prior says,  
In some of his satiric lays,  
I eat and drink and sleep—what then ?  
I eat and drink and sleep again.  
Thus idly lolls my time away,  
And just does nothing all the day.”

Aunt Simpson’s housekeeping was very much  
that of Susanna’s nephew William, who was

a Cobbett among the country gentry, when he kept house at Thackwood Nook thirty or forty years later. He could plough, sow, and mow with his own hands. He rose and breakfasted early, dined with his men at noon on farmers' fare (he was especially fond of potato-pot, or a slice of boiled bacon), had his favourite dish of tea (out of a blue basin) at five in the afternoon, no supper, and early to bed.

There was one task which ladies in the country were in these days fain to set themselves, partly from natural vocation, partly to serve as an occupation and amusement when life threatened to grow too tedious. And this was a task which Susanna Blamire entered upon and sported, braving the derision of her brother, the doctor. Ladies Bountiful who now content themselves with distributing flannel, soup-tickets, and Tract Society volumes, did not hesitate then to take upon themselves the cure of bodies, and to prescribe for all the ills that flesh is heir to, drugging patients right and left. Miss Sukey shared the hankering after the practice of her brother's profession which is so strong in

many women. She was in the habit of recounting with great glee these medical exploits, while all the time she was not too proud to fall back upon her college-bred brother's learning and experience when her wonderful performances did not compass their end.

“For you must know I'm famed for skill  
In the nice compound of a pill,”

she boasts on one occasion. On another she details with more prudent reserve :—

“And now the sisters take their evening walk—  
One famed for goodness and one famed for joke,  
For physic too some little is renowned,  
With every salve that loves to heal the wound.  
The pulse she feels with true mysterious air,  
While Mrs. Graham of strengthening broths takes care:  
That sickness must be hopeless of all end  
Which her good home-made wine no way can mend.  
The brother then his skill of medicine tries,  
And rarely in his hands the patient dies.”

This charming quack, who is a little inclined to flourish in the eyes of the world the fact that “she likes too well a bit of fun,” and that she is “famed for joke,” scorns to dwell on failing health and flagging spirits, unless when the



pressure is irresistible. Even then she does not make an unalloyed lamentation. Yet, apart from any special cause, there was a great strain of pensiveness in that merry soul. She would carry out her guitar to play plaintive airs, and compose verses in keeping with them, in the shaws dropping yellow in the fall, when the Caldew was sobbing and moaning over its stones. And with such a temperament she must often have started off of an evening in that finished toilette of "a dressed head," and with the other finishing touches to her dress of snowy clear muslin neckerchief and apron, to pace the flagged walk in the dusk of the oak-trees, and scent the faint, dying musk. When old Aunt Simpson was taking her nap, and Mrs. Graham was studying the recipe-book and the linen-press, sister Sukey must have snatched a moment's truce—

"To hear the wind blow, and to look at the moon."

These winter months in Carlisle, where the best society in the town was open to them, proved a cheerful change to the sisters. There Susanna Blamire met and entered into an affec-

tionate alliance with a kindred spirit, Miss Gilpin of Scaleby Castle, who belonged to another ancient Cumberland family, as fresh in its type, and with sons and daughters as gifted, as those in the family of the Blamires. These Gilpins claimed descent from Bernard Gilpin, the Apostle of the North, the gallant, homely country parson who, in the sixteenth century, wandered over hill and dale with his Bible in his hand, confronted his own time-serving bishop, and dealt an uncompromising rebuke to a fierce Borderer who had hung up a glove in a church, Border fashion, as a challenge to any man who dared to take it down. "I hear," thundered this Gilpin from his pulpit, "that one of you hath hanged up a glove even in this sacred place. See! I have taken it down, and who dare meddle with me?" In Susanna Blamire's generation, a Gilpin of Scaleby Castle had written "Forest Scenery," the best book on the subject in that day; whilst his brother, more than a fair artist, had etched the cattle figures for the book. A third brother, a doctor in the army, was knighted for his services, and was

in favour both with General Washington and with George III. Catherine Gilpin, their sister, and a daughter of the commandant who was compelled to surrender Carlisle Castle to Prince Charlie, was a lively and intelligent woman. She was herself a song-writer of decided talent. Witness her Trafalgar sea-fight, with its exulting beginning:—

“ O lads ! I’se fit to burst wi’ news,  
There’s letters frae the fleet,  
We’ve banged the French—ay, out and out,  
And done the thing complete.

“ There was sic shower o’ shell grenades,  
Bunched out wi’ shot like grapes,  
And bullets big as beath our heads,  
Chained twa and twa wi’ reapes.”

Not less natural is the tender truth of the sailors’ sorrow for Nelson :—

“ ‘ O wae’s in me ! ’ our Johnny says,  
‘ That I suld hae to tell,  
For not a man aboard the fleet  
But wish’d t’ hae been his-sel’. ’ ”

Still more admirable is Miss Gilpin’s photograph of the village club and its hero :—

“O lozes o’ me ! we are merry,  
I nobbet but wish ye could hear,  
Dick Spriggins he acts sae like players,  
Ye niver heard naething sae queer.

“And first he comes in for King Richard,  
And stamps wid his fit on the ground ;  
He wad part with his kingdom for horses,  
O lozes o’ me ! what a sound.

“And then he comes in for young Roma,  
And spreads out his beetle black fist,  
I’s e jist fit to drop whilst he’s talking,  
Ye niver seed yen sae distrest.

“O lozes o’ me ! it is moving,  
I hates for to hear a man cry ;  
And then he luiks up at a window,  
To see if lal Juliet be by.

“And then he lets wi’t she’s talking,  
And speaks that ye hardly can hear,  
But I think she cries out on Squire Roma,  
And owther says Hinny or Dear.

“Then up wi’ Dick Spriggins for ever !  
May he leeve a’ the days o’ his life ;  
May his bairns be as honest as he’s been,  
And may he aye maister his wife.”

The Blamires and Miss Gilpin lodged in the

same house in Carlisle, at 14, Finkle Street, near where the Caldew falls into the Eden.

The association of the two ladies was a source of great satisfaction to both. The cordial women worked, chatted, and wrote together—writing more than once conjointly their comic and pathetic songs. Together they visited Gilsland Spa, walking and riding in the picturesque dale where young Walter Scott, in after years, met and wooed Charlotte Carpenter. In the assembly-room at Gilsland, and at the hunt-ball in Carlisle, Susanna Blamire looked on with her friend at the dancing, in which Miss Sukey, in her own day, had been matchless.

Susanna's spirit through all her life was a flickering light in a fragile lamp. She had inherited from her mother a delicate constitution. Before she reached thirty she had been driven to perpetrate jests on her rheumatism and asthma. Several of her poetic pieces—really fugitive—have a passing reference to sickness, or to recovery from sickness, and are invocations to the health which would not come at her call,

although with a wistful remonstrance she reminds the unpropitious goddess Hygeia—

“’Tis not because I have not been  
Amidst the nymphs and shepherds seen,  
For as they frolick’d on the mead,  
Gay bounding to the oaken reed,  
This foot I ween as light could pass  
As any yet that trod the grass.”

Yet she is forced to write :—

“Nature’s the same, the spring returns,  
The leaf again adorns the tree;  
How tasteless this to her who mourns,  
To her who droops and fades like me !  
No emblem for myself I find,  
Save what some dying plant bestows,  
Save where its drooping head I bind,  
And mark how strong the likeness grows.”

At the age of forty-seven Susanna Blamire’s little vigour was spent, her day done. The dancer by the road-side, and during the holiday hours of “the merry meets,” danced no more. The physician could not heal her own deadly wound. Miss Sukey, “the bonnie and varra lish” young lass of so many kindly memories, lay down resignedly on her bed in the house in

Finkle Street, and died in the faith of a Christian, and with a Christian's peace.

In her will Susanna had written an earnest request that, as she humbly trusted in the mercies of Almighty God that she should be received into everlasting happiness, so she trusted that her dear sister Graham would not suffer her grief to become excessive for the loss of one whose every hour she had been the means of rendering "easy, happy, and delightful."

At Miss Blamire's funeral between eighty and ninety country-people voluntarily presented themselves. In many cases they walked the distance of seven miles twice over, to carry Miss Sukey home from the house in Carlisle where she died to the Blamire burial-ground in the little churchyard at the village of Raughton Head, where she had tripped to school. This was not a small mark of respect paid to a single woman who had lived among them, though it represented but a tithe of the gallant attendance of hundreds of yeomen, who rode like an old Border following, to do honour to the triumph of Miss Sukey's popular nephew, "Willy Blamire."



He was first elected sheriff, and then one of the members for Cumberland. On the last occasion, during the ceremony of chairing him, he boasted that there was one thing that he could do better than his fellow-member, Sir James Graham of Netherby. This was to rise and bow many times in the course of his distinguished, but vibrating progress, since he had been to the manner born,—early accustomed to stand while driving his swaying corn-carts.

Susanna Blamire had no call to write for bread; neither was she induced to write by the representations of her neighbours. Nor was she a woman full of passionate life demanding utterance, though what she did write she wrote for her own satisfaction. Her few longer poems are pleasing trifles, never rising above mediocrity. They are most of them founded on domestic subjects, with purely personal, family, or friendly interests. There are elegies, marriage odes, individual remonstrances, and private reflections. But Susanna Blamire's songs are much more.

The joint songs of Susanna Blamire and

Catherine Gilpin which have been preserved are "The Cumberland Scold" and "The Sailor-lad's Return."

There is a song which has been attributed at different times to Susanna Blamire and to Lady Anne Lindsay. It appeared in more than one old-world magazine, but neither of the ladies to whom it was ascribed thought fit to claim it. The song is that of the "Carrier Pigeon," beginning—

"Why tarries my love,  
Oh where does he rove?  
My love is long absent from me.  
Come hither, my dove,  
I'll write to my love,  
And send him a letter by thee."

It has an elegant airiness, and is tenderly lackadaisical in tone. From internal evidence it may be attributed to Lady Anne Lindsay.

Miss Blamire's songs can be arranged in two classes, whether they are English or in the Cumbrian or the Scotch dialect. There are those which are little spurts of raillery, or half-droll, half-serious narratives of every-day inci-

dents. Sometimes they are tales with morals. They have much of the quiet humour and the gentle wisdom breathed into similar songs by Lady Nairne, only Susanna Blamire's songs are unequal, her humour sparkles rather less, her wisdom is not so ripe and mellow, and her diction has not, in general, the exquisite suitability of the words of Lady Nairne's best songs. Here are good specimens of those songs which are neither comic nor tragic, but form in a sliding scale the genteel comedy of song. Besides the quotations already given from "Auld Robin Forbes," the first and the last verses have very happy touches.

"And auld Robin Forbes has gien tem a dance,  
I put on my speckets to see them aw prance;  
I thought o' the days when I was but fifteen,  
And skipp'd wi' the best upon Forbes's Green.  
Of aw things that is, I think thought is meast queer,  
It brings that that's by-past and sets it down here;  
I see Willy as plain as I do this bit leace,  
When he teuk his coat lappet and dieghted nis feace.

\* \* \* \* \*

"When the clock had struck eight I expected him hame,  
And whiles went to meet him as far as Dumbain;  
Of aw hours it tell't, eight was dearest to me,  
But now when it strykes there's a tear in my e'e.

Oh Willy, dear Willy ! it never can be  
That age, time, or death can divide thee and me ;  
For the yen spot o' earth that's aye dearest to me  
Is the turf that has covered my Willie from me."

In " Barley Broth " the violent dispute as to whether the house-dame has put barley or rice into the pot reads like the argument of a song in a French *vaudiville*:—

" ' I mek nae faut,' our Jwhonny says,  
    ' The broth is gude and varra neyce,  
I only say—it's barley broth.'  
    ' You says what's wrong,' says I, ' it's reyce.'"

The summing up is highly characteristic:—

" Thus tryfles vex and tryfles please,  
    And tryfles mek the sum o' leyfe,  
And tryfles mek a bonny lass  
    A wretched or a happy weyfe."

" Old Harry's Return " abounds in loving manliness and womanliness:—

" My Harry he smiles and he wipes aff the tear,  
An' I'm doubtful again gin it can be he's here,  
Till he taks wee bit Janet to sit on his knee,  
And ca's her his dawty, for oh ! she's like me.  
Then the neighbours come in and they welcome him hame,  
And I fa' a-greeting tho' muckle I think shame,  
Then I steal ben the house while they talk o' the war,  
For I turn could as death when he shows them a scar.

They tell o' ane Elliot, an' brave he maun be,  
 But I ken a poor soldier as brave yet as he,  
 For when that the Spaniards were wrecked on the tide,  
 'They are soldiers, my lads, let us save them,' he cried.

"The neighbours being gane, and the bairns on his knee,  
 He fetched a long sigh and he look'd sair at me :  
 'Poor woman,' quo' he, 'ye'd hae muckle to do  
 To get bread to yoursel' and thir wee bit things too.'  
 'It is true, my dear Harry, I toiled very hard,  
 Sent Elspie to service and Jockey to herd,  
 For I kent verra weel t'was an auld soldier's pride,  
 Aye to tak frae his king, but frae nae ane beside.'"

The mercenary wooers of "Tibbie Fowler o' the Glen" (the traditional heiress of Scotch song) are hit off almost as artistically as the suitors for "Jenny's Bawbee :"—

"There's Nabob Jock comes strutting ben,  
 He thinks the day's his ain,  
 But were he a' hung round wi' gowd,  
 He'd find himsel' mista'en.

\* \* \* \* \*

"There's grinning Pate laughs a' day through,  
 The blythest lad you'll see ;  
 But troth he laughs sae out o' place,  
 He'd laugh gin I did dee.

"There's Sandy he's sae fu' o' lees,  
 To talk wi' him is vain,  
 For gin we a' should say 'twas fair,  
 He'd prove that it did rain.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The priests and lawyers ding me dead,  
 But Gude kens wha's the best,  
 And then comes in the soldier brave,  
 And drums out a' the rest.

“The country squire and city beau,  
 I have had them on their knee ;  
 But weel I ken to gowd they bow,  
 And no downright to me.”

In the same vein of maidenly satire are the verses—

“O Donald ! ye are just the man  
 Who, when he's got a wife,  
 Begins to fratch—nae notice tain,  
 They're strangers a' their life.

“The fan may drop—she takes it up,  
 The husband keeps his chair,  
 She hands the kettle—gives his cup,  
 Without even ‘Thank you, dear.’

\* \* \* \* \*

“But wedlock tears away the veil,  
 The goddess is nae mair,  
 He thinks his wife a silly thing,  
 She thinks her man a bear.”

With the sound Addisonian advice in conclusion :—

“Let then the lover be the friend,  
 The loving friend for life ;  
 Think but thyself the happiest spouse,  
 She'll be the happiest wife.”

Few songs have the dizzy delight, the strong tide of fondness in which all personal pride is swept away, of the following:—

“I’ll hae a new coatie when Willy comes hame,  
 I’ll hae a new plaidie and a’ o’ the same,  
 An’ I’ll hae some pearlings to make myself fine,  
 For it’s a’ to delight this dear laddie o’ mine.  
*Bessy Bell is admired by a’ sorts o’ men,  
 I’ll mind a’ her fashions and how she comes ben ;  
 I’ll mind her at kirk and I’ll mind her at fair,  
 An’ never ance try to look myself mair.*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
*For I maun be happy when Willy comes hame.”*

There are assurances in the volunteered consolation administered by a departing lover, which have the delicious practicability and matter-of-factness of that scoured silk with the stain on it, obligingly worn by the apparition of Mrs. Veal for her better identification.

“I’ll nobbut gae to yonder burn, and then I’ll come and see thee.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“I’ll tak a staff into my hand, and come and see my dearie O.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“I’ll meet thee at the kirkgate, my ain kind dearie O.”

In tribute to the two fine old ladies and their fast friendship, there is a song which Susanna



Blamire called "Miss Gilpin's Song," writing below the title, "A song for Miss Gilpin's ain singing when set at her wheel."

"Let lords and fine ladies look round them and see,  
If e'er ane among them be blyther than me ;  
I sit at my wheely and sing through the day,  
An' ca' 't my ain warld that runs rolling away.

"Sae twirl thee round, wheely, I'll sing while I may,  
I'll try to be happy the whole o' the day ;  
If we wadna mak griefs o' bit trifles sae sma',  
The warld would run smoothly roun', roun' wi' us a'.

"There's ups and downs in it, I see very plain,  
For the spoke that's at bottom gets topmost again.  
Sae whirl thee round, wheely, I see how things turn,  
And I see too 'tis folly for mortals to mourn.

"That life is a spinster I often have read,  
And too fine she draws out her spider-like thread ;  
A breath can destroy what's so slenderly made,  
And life for her trouble has seldom been paid.

"Sae twirl thee round, wheely, I'll sing while I may,  
I'll try to be happy the whole o' the day ;  
If we wadna mak griefs o' bit trifles sae sma',  
The warld would run smoothly roun', roun' wi' us a'."

But Susanna Blamire's "What ails this heart o' mine ?" is written with her life-blood. In proof

of it one has but to appeal to the wondering passionateness, the woefulness, rather implied than uttered, in the first and second verses, together with the unapproachable artlessness of their fancies—sick of love.

“What ails this heart o’ mine ?  
What fills this watery e’e ?  
What gars me a’ turn cauld as death  
When I tak leave o’ thee ?  
When thou art far awa’  
Thou’lt dearer grow to me,  
But change o’ place and change o’ folk  
May gar thy fancy gee.

“When I gae out at e’en,  
Or walk at morning ear’,  
*Ilk rustling bush will seem to say,*  
*‘I used to meet thee there.’*  
There I’ll sit down and cry,  
And live aneath the tree,  
*And when a leaf fa’s in my lap,*  
*I’ll ca’ ’t a word frae thee.”*

After the first and second the third verse is slightly forced, and repeats what has gone before; but the last verse returns to the yearning simplicity of the first:—

“Wi’ sic thoughts in my mind,  
Time through the world may gae,

And find my heart in twenty years  
The same as 'tis to-day.  
'Tis thoughts that bind the soul  
An' keep friends in the e'e,  
*An' gin I think I see thee aye,*  
*What can part thee and me ?*"

This is one of the few of Susanna Blamire's songs on which she herself seems to have set store. Several copies of it were found among her papers.

The nearest to "What ails this heart o' mine?" though not equal to it, are—"Ye sall walk in silk attire," and "The Waeful Heart." In the last, the eager response of the speaker to the imagined summons of her dead, records a still more beautiful and perfect trust than that in Burns's lines,—

"A thocht ungentle ne'er could be  
The thocht o' Mary Morrison."

Susanna Blamire writes,—

"I follow wheresoe'er ye lead,  
Ye canna lead to ill."

Susanna Blamire's song of "The Traveller's Return," said to have been written in her forty-

second year, stands quite apart in the list of her songs. It is a delicate and subtle reproduction of the feelings of a lonely old man on his return to the native country from which he has been too long absent. There are the throb and thrill of alternating expectation, doubt, and bewilderment. We are made to feel the prick of each drawback in the attainment of the cherished wish, the piteous recalling of what is lost, the keen disappointment which is half mortification and shame. Yet this at first relieves itself in wrathful petulance at the affectation and the self-conceit of "the pensive chields" and "the nymph," who cannot understand the old man, softening a little with the thought of their "fathers' names" and "her mother's face," and melting at last into manly resignation and a touching claim on their forbearance. All is as nearly as possible perfect.

Where so much is good it is not easy to make distinctions. The very first line of the song has a peculiar, tender grace that is not often found in Susanna Blamire's lines :—

“When silent time, wi’ lightly foot,  
Had trod on thirty years.”

There is a wistful, sorrowful recognition of something which has slipped by for ever, and yet, perhaps, has never been so missed before, in the long-drawn-out repetition :—

“Those days that followed me afar,  
Those happy days o’ mine.”

The unlooked-for desolation of the arrival is rendered complete by the late appearance of the old servant, sorely altered, like everything else, and in the same doleful humour as his master :—

“Till Donald tottered to the door,  
Whom I left in his prime,  
And grat to see the lad return  
He bore about lang syne.”

After the utter mournfulness of the climax,—

“I closed the door and sobbed aloud,  
To think on auld lang syne,”

the graphic introduction of the “pensy chields” is a reaction with an under-current of humour :—

“Some pensy chields—a new-sprung race,”

[there speaks the scorn of the old Scotch-

man, with his long pedigree and his rampant Toryism,)

“Wad next their welcome pay,  
Wha shuddered at my Gothic wa’s,”

(after the fashion of arrogant, effeminate fop-  
lings,)

“And wished my groves away.

‘Cut, cut!’ they cried, ‘those aged elms,’”

(in the spirit of the trim Vandalism and the toy  
wildernesses of the eighteenth century,)

“‘Lay low yon mournfu’ pine.’  
‘Na, Na!’”

(there is sacrilege in the thought to the old  
man, for—)

‘Our fathers’ names grow there,  
‘Memorials o’ lang syne.’”

After all, they were not unkindly, these young kinsmen, though they were inconsiderate, and they tried to divert the listlessness of their ancient relation — “the old fogie” of present slang. But how can he enter the old town without confronting more changes there, and what should he miss most on each face that he meets and knows, but the ineffable “youthfu’

bloom ?” As he revenges himself upon his young companions by undervaluing their extravagantly vaunted ball-room belle, it is with a fine shade at once of fault-finding and praise :—

“ Her mother’s blushing cheeks  
Were fairer far lang syne.”

But the crabbed critic relies, after all, on the young men’s generosity, and falls back on a fellow-feeling which must exist beneath every freak of fashion :—

“ Ye sons to comrades o’ my youth,  
Forge an auld man’s spleen,  
Wha midst your gayest scenes still mourns  
The days he ance has seen.

“ When time has passed and seasons fled  
Your hearts will feel like mine,  
And aye the sang will maist delight  
That minds ye o’ lang syne.”

Contrast the traveller’s return and his reception after his thirty years’ absence with the short absence of Colin from his voyage, in Jean Adam’s song of “There’s nae luck about the house.” It was only the impatience of love that could speak of Colin as having been “lang awa’.”



## WHAT AILS THIS HEART O' MINE ?

WHAT ails this heart o' mine ?

What fills this watery e'e ?

What gars me a' turn could as death

When I tak leave o' thee ?

When thou art far awa',

Thou'lt dearer grow to me ;

But change o' place and change o' folk

May gar thy fancy gee.

When I gae out at e'en,

Or walk at morning ear',

Ilk rustling bush will seem to say,

' I used to meet thee there.'

There I'll sit down and cry,

And live aneath the tree,

And when a leaf fa's in my lap,

I'll ca' 't a word frae thee.

I'll hie me to the bower

That thou wi' roses tied,

And where, wi' mony a blushing bud,

I strove myself to hide.

I'll doat on ilka spot

Where I hae been wi' thee ;

And ca' to mind some kindly word

By ilka burn and tree.

Wi' sic thoughts i' my mind,  
Time through the world may gae,  
And find my heart in twenty years  
The same as 'tis to-day.  
'Tis thoughts that bind the soul,  
And keep friends i' the e'e ;  
And gin I think I see thee aye,  
What can part thee and me ?

---

### THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN.

When silent time, wi' lightly foot,  
Had trod on thirty years,  
I sought again my native land  
Wi' mony hopes and fears :  
Wha kens gin the dear friends I left  
May still continue mine ?  
Or gin I e'er again shall taste  
The joys I left langsyne ?

As I drew near my ancient pile,  
My heart beat a' the way ;  
Ilk place I pass'd seem'd yet to speak  
O' some dear former day ;

Those days that follow'd me afar,  
Those happy days o' mine,  
Whilk made one think the present joys  
A' naething to langsyne !

The ivied tower now met my eye,  
Where minstrels used to blaw ;  
Nae friend stepp'd forth wi' open hand,  
Nae weel-kenn'd face I saw ;  
Till Donald totter'd to the door,  
Whom I left in his prime,  
And grat to see the lad return  
He bore about langsyne.

I ran to ilka dear friend's room,  
As if to find them there,  
I knew where ilk ane used to sit,  
And hung o'er mony a chair ;  
Till soft remembrance thrēw a veil  
Across these e'en o' mine,  
I closed the door, and sobb'd aloud,  
To think on auld langsyne !

Some pensy chiels, a new-sprung race,  
Wad next their welcome pay,  
Wha shudder'd at my Gothic wa's,  
And wish'd my groves away :

“Cut, cut,” they cried, “those aged elms,  
Lay low yon mournfu’ pine : ”  
“Na ! na ! our fathers’ names grow there,  
Memorials o’ langsyne.”

To wean me frae these waefu’ thoughts,  
They took me to the town ;  
But sair on ilka weel-kenn’d face  
I miss’d the youthfu’ bloom.  
At balls they pointed to a nymph  
Whom a’ declared divine ;  
But sure her mother’s blushing cheeks  
Were fairer far langsyne !

In vain I sought in music’s sound  
To find that magic art,  
Which oft in Scotland’s ancient lays  
Has thrill’d through a’ my heart :  
One song had mony an artfu’ turn,  
My ear confess’d ’twas fine,  
But miss’d the simple melody  
I listen’d to langsyne.

Ye sons to comrades o’ my youth,  
Forgie an auld man’s spleen,  
Wha ’midst your gayest scenes still mourns  
The days he ance has seen :

When time has pass'd and seasons fled,  
Your hearts will feel like mine ;  
And aye the song will maist delight  
That minds ye o' langsyne !

---

AND YE SHALL WALK IN SILK ATTIRE.

And ye shall walk in silk attire,  
And siller hae to spare,  
Gin ye'll consent to be his bride,  
Nor think o' Donald mair.

O wha wad buy a silken gown  
Wi' a puir broken heart ;  
Or what's to me a siller crown,  
Gin frae my love I part ?

The mind wha's every wish is pure,  
Far dearer is to me ;  
And ere I'm forced to break my faith  
I'll lay me down an' dee !

For I hae pledged my virgin troth  
Brave Donald's fate to share ;  
And he has gi'en to me his heart,  
Wi' a' its virtues rare.

His gentle manner won my heart,  
He gratefu' took the gift ;  
Could I but think to tak' it back—  
It would be waur than theft !

For langest life can ne'er repay  
The love he bears to me ;  
And ere I'm forced to break my troth  
I'll lay me down an' dee.

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### BARLEY BROTH.

If tempers were put up to seal,  
Our Jwohn's wad bear a deuced preyce ;  
He vowed 'twas barley i' the broth,  
“ Upon my word,” says I, “ it's reyce.”

“ I mek nea faut,” our Jwohnnny says,  
“ The broth is gude and varra neyce ;  
I only say—it's barley broth—”  
“ You says what's wrang,” says I, “ it's reyce.”

“ Did ever mortal hear the like !  
As if I hadn't sense to tell !  
Tou may think reyce the better thing,  
But barley broth dis just as well.”

“And sae it mud, if it was there,  
The deil a grain is i’ the pot ;  
But tou mun ayways thrup yen down—  
I’ve drawn the deevil of a lot.”

“And what’s the lot that I have drawn ?  
Pervarsion is a woman’s neam !  
Sae fares-t’e-weel, I’ll serve my king,  
And never, never more come heam.”

Now Jenny frets frae mworn to neet,  
The Sunday cap’s nae langer neyce,  
She aye puts barley i’ the broth,  
And hates the varra neame o’ reyce.

Thus tryfles vex, and tryfles please,  
And tryfles mek the sum o’ leyfe ;  
And tryfles mek a bonny lass  
A wretched or a happy weyfe !



## JEAN GLOVER.

1758—1801.

AYRSHIRE is a land of green pastures, level woods and fields, and bleak moors. Even its sea-border is rendered in many places unpicturesque by a stretch of barren sand. It needs the solan goose-haunted rock of Ailsa Craig, and the beetling mountains of the island of Arran opposite, to redeem its character. But Ayrshire is green as the Emerald Isle; and the houses of its little cottar farmers were wont to be whitewashed with a self-assertion and an independence, part dogged and part cheery. Its climate is that of the Devonshire of Scotland; and as Devonshire lanes have a rich flora, no wild flowers in Scotland bloom "by bank and brae," north, south, east, or west, like the lucken-gowan of Kyle, the pimpernel and the variegated

thistle of Carrick. As for birds, one who dearly loved Ayrshire asserted that walking along by the "lush" greenness and budding whiteness of an Ayrshire hedgerow in the end of May, he could have caught the young linnets, which were tottering on the sprays and tumbling out of their nests, in hatfuls.

Ayrshire has other singers besides birds, and other distinctions than wild flowers. The natives are a strong, resolute race, with wild Irish blood in them here and there. They are conspicuous in whatever cause they adopt and make their own. Now they are stern, devoted Covenanters with the Fool of Fenwick—Guthrie ; now on the losing side of high Toryism, with poor Lord Kilmarnock, who in his trial before the House of Lords, and in his execution on Tower Hill, made such havoc among the hearts of the fine ladies of London ; and again, they are winning the people's hearts and braving obloquy for half a century with Thomas Cochran, Lord Dundonald.

The women of Ayrshire had a gift of being known for good or for evil before "Robbie

Burns" bestowed his immortality on the Ayrshire lasses who were his contemporaries. "May Collean," the Scottish sultana Schehezerade, who stopped the immolation of wives perpetrated by a "fause Sir John" of ballad renown, was an Ayrshire lass; so was Jean, Countess of Cassilis, who eloped with the gipsy Davie; an Ayrshire wife, though a Renfrew lass, was Christian Shaw, daughter of the Laird of Barragan, who had the horrible fate, when a girl of thirteen, to be reckoned bewitched by one of the Barragan maid-servants, and to cause the burning for witchcraft of five wretched men and women on the Gallows-green of Paisley. But Christian Shaw did other and better things for Renfrew and Paisley before she fell, with her foibles and infirmities, into the ghostly hands of the minister of Kilmaurs. With the aid of Lady Blantyre, she inaugurated fine spinning and bleaching, and the great thread manufacture of Paisley, towards the close of the seventeenth century.

Barbara Gilmour, of Dunlop, who acquired the art of cheese-making in Ireland, whither her

family had fled from persecution, and brought it back with her to her native village, was yet another Ayrshire woman; and a fifth was Jean Glover of Kilmarnock, with a desperate strain of gipsy wildness and recklessness in her temperament. She was born in 1758, a year later than Robert Burns, and not long after that ride in the coach during which Miss Jean Elliot of Minto composed her "Flowers of the Forest."

"Auld Kilmarnock" was then a long street, made up of the houses and stances of weavers, who were chiefly employed in weaving the Kilmarnock cowl, the universal nightcap of Scotland. Though Jean was but a poor child in one of these weavers' families, she must have been reasonably well educated in the New Testament, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Shorter Catechism, and the multiplication table. She must have learnt, too, something of the art of writing; for she would go to the parish school in her "daidly" and bare feet, and sit on the same "furm" with boys twice as big as herself, who could not help having a sneaking kindness for wild Jean.

Jean's nature could never have been a meek or saintly one in her splendid, handsome youth. But surely it was comparatively an innocent lass who ran about to the buzz and hum of wheels, and the rattle of treadles, with companions bold and heedless as herself, though the "wabster carles" might rise from their benches, lay aside their broadsheets, their sermons which had been thundered on the moss by the comrades of Cameron and Peden, and come out covered with blue and red worsted thrums, to shake their heads to carlines in linen jackets and mutches, and predict solemnly that no good would come of a set of light-heeled, light-headed loons and hempies, who were fast degenerating around them. No good came of them so far as Jean Glover was concerned. Yet there must have been still some good in Jean while she was a strapping young woman in her buff jacket, linsey-woolsey petticoat, and snooded or "screened" hair. She would draw water at the well near the cross where young Boyd had shot Lord Soulis with an arrow from his cross-bow, or stray up the Fenwick water by

which Boyd had lain in ambush, and beheld the retribution that in turn reached the Boyds' great castle of Dean.

It was a black day for Jean Glover when she began to attend the village fairs and races all round Kilmarnock. These fairs and races were in great part the result of a revolt against the high-minded stubborn despotism of the David Deanses of the West; and it might be the reaction of a curbed, galled nature which helped to work the mischief in Jean Glover's case too. Be that as it may, Jean played with fire, gaped and stared, laughed and fleeced. At last she became "madly enamoured" of Burns's "slight o' hand blackguard," ran away with him, and married him. Thenceforth she was launched on a career of wanton riot and disreputable adventure, which, like a troubled sea, could cast up nothing save mire and dirt.

But it had better be said here that Jean Glover is a proof of the truth of the proverb, "Give a dog an ill name and hang him." Poor Jean had hard lines dealt to her—not only in her hapless fortunes, but in the words spoken

of her by a man who might have spared her.

Robert Burns was not wont to be hard on aught but what he held to be slavish meanness or base hypocrisy; but he was hard in his withering words on the poor strolling player and “randy gangrel” wife from whose lips he took down her sweet hill-flavoured song. A spade may be a spade, and yet a taste for strongly-spiced epithets may exist also. When a book was being written on Burns’s contemporaries, and an investigation made among old Ayrshire men and women, it was found that Jean Glover was bad enough in all truth, but was not worse than a roughly-hardened tramp, a wilful, regardless woman. Although she “rugged and reived” at whatever came in her way, still she was not a thief in the ordinary meaning of the term, and she was faithful to her roving, ne’er-do-well husband, who had beguiled her to turn her back for ever on the dull Weavers’ Row in Kilmarnock, and to wander the country with him—the best singer and actor in his troop.



Jean had wrung the hearts of what kindred owned her by going off and wedding the player Richard; yet he might not have been unkind to her beyond her deserts, reprobate though he was. Her daily round was not always among the filth and scum of towns. She had many a trudge with him through the peat-hags where white flowers hold up their spotless heads above the brown water; or she walked knee-deep in ling, startling the plover; or scrambled in a flutter of rags through thickets of trailing brambles or wilding sloes. The roads were then execrable. When little Hugh, Earl of Loudon, was conveyed as a child from Loudon Castle to Edinburgh, only fifty years before Jean Glover's epoch, it was in a pannier slung across the back of a horse, and accompanied by a servant on another horse; the journey occupying the better part of a week.

Jean must have shared with her husband and his allies many a meal taken from their wallets and spread out by a convenient spring, where she could fill her kettle when there was time to kindle a fire, and where the Meg-Merrilies stew

—come by anyhow—could be eaten hot. Many a sleep Jean must have snatched when wrapped in her duffle cloak, and pillowed by the bracken. Would not the loneliness, the freedom, after which Jean had panted though she had found it, poor wretch! to be only the worst kind of slavery, the scents and sounds of wild things around her, recall to her fitfully and dreamily some purer fancies of the settled, righteous homes, and the peaceful, virtuous hearths among which she had been bred, and which she had “madly” forsaken?

When Jean came back to Kilmarnock, she brazened out her disgrace in the eyes of her sedate townsmen by playing on her tambourine, as she did at the close mouth in Irvine, to attract newly-landed sailors, ploughmen, and apprentice weavers to the juggling tricks of her husband in the room down the close. There she flaunted in her player's finery of scarlet, tinsel, and glass beads, “the brawest woman that had ever been seen to step in leather shoon.” But she could not have been half so comely as when, in her simple jacket and modest snood, she first

“forgathered” with the players. Notwithstanding, did not the words of the Song of Kyle, which she sang as she tossed the tambourine above her head, bring back in an irresistible rush, alike to the singer and to her audience, wafts of the fragrance of the wild thyme and the heather, and echoes of the burnies which hold in their bickering the blithe babble of children and the soft “sough” of good women’s sighs?

Jean Glover dropped down in her endless march with her husband somewhere about Letterkenny, in Ireland, and died there in 1801, aged forty-two years, hardly past the prime of womanhood.

“Ower the moor among the heather” reads as if Jean had first lilted it out amid the wilds in the early days of her wanderings, before the spring had been taken out of her spirit by low companionship, bodily weariness, and taunting shame, which sits and grins even on the ill-clad backs of those who have as little to lose as Jean had.

“Coming through the craigs o’ Kyle,  
Among the bonnie bloomin’ heather,  
There I met a bonnie lassie  
Keeping a’ her ewes thegither.  
Ower the moor, among the heather,  
Ower the moor, among the heather,  
There I met a bonnie lassie  
Keeping a’ her ewes thegither.”

There is an ineffable buoyance, an abounding blitheness in the words as well as in the tune. In keeping with it, there is a rich rejoicing in the wide world as the singer had known it in the wilds. There is little more in the song, unless it be that in the warmth of the closing vow we see a reflection of Jean’s own delirium of love for the player Richard, which had caused her to cast from her so much that a woman holds dear :—

“Ower the moor among the heather,  
Down among the blooming heather,  
By sea and sky! she shall be mine,  
The bonnie lass among the heather.”

## O'ER THE MUIR AMANG THE HEATHER.

COMIN' through the craigs o' Kyle,  
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather,  
There I met a bonnie lassie  
Keepin' a' her flocks thegither.  
Ower the muir amang the heather,  
Ower the muir amang the heather,  
There I met a bonnie lassie  
Keepin' a' her flocks thegither.

Says I, my dear, where is thy hame?  
In muir or dale, pray tell me whither?  
Says she, I tent the fleecy flocks  
That feed amang the bloomin' heather.  
Ower the muir, &c.

We laid us down upon a bank,  
Sae warm and sunnie was the weather;  
She left her flocks at large to rove  
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather.  
Ower the muir, &c.

She charmed my heart, and aye sinsyne  
I couldna think on ony ither;  
By sea and sky! she shall be mine,  
The bonnie lass amang the heather.  
Ower the muir, &c.

## MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON.

1758—1816.

RATHER more than a century ago, Elizabeth Hamilton, a lively little girl of eight years of age, was in the habit of riding every Monday morning on her old horse Lochaber through the bean and oat fields, and round the broomy knowes and stony craigs which lie near a certain farm-house in the Carse of Gowrie, some four miles distant from Stirling. In that town she was boarded with “a single lady,” an acquaintance of her aunt, Mrs. Marshall, and waited on by her own special servant-lass, Isabel Irvine.

Elizabeth Hamilton was Irish by her birth-place, but Scotch by descent and nurture. She came of a “gentle” branch of the “haughty Hamiltons.” The estate of Woodhall had been granted by a charter from Pope Honorius to

one of her ancestors, "for good deeds done in the Holy Land in the first Crusade." Her great-grandfather had been as strong on the side of the Kirk in his day ; and he quitted Scotland in discontent on the intrusion of the Liturgy, buying an estate in Ulster, and settling in Ireland. His son Charles, who held a civil appointment under Government, married a beauty and an heiress. His wife took the liberty of squandering her own fortune, and so embarrassed him that he was tempted to spend a part of the public money in payment of his private debts. He died broken-hearted before his dishonour was publicly known. His son, Elizabeth Hamilton's father, quitted the university, and entered a mercantile house in London. Being forced to abandon London, owing to ill-health, he began business in Belfast. Here he married, and died early in 1759, a year after the birth of his youngest child Elizabeth, leaving his widow and three children in reduced circumstances. Mrs. Hamilton consented to give Elizabeth, at six years of age, to be brought up by her aunt in Stirlingshire. Elizabeth's mother, an intelli-



gent woman, was only able to visit her girl once. In her ninth year the child was left altogether an orphan, and, like Miss Sukey Blamire, owed to her father's sister the care and affection which surrounded her in childhood and youth. This Aunt Marshall was also something of a character, although in a different style from Aunt Simpson. She was a daughter of that Charles Hamilton who came to so much grief with his beauty and heiress. She had been handsome, clever, and carefully educated. Before she was sixteen, she had been engaged to the eldest son of a baronet. Her father's ruin followed. She was thrown on her own exertions, and was thankful to earn a livelihood by becoming a humble companion to a distant relative of rank, who resided in Bath. On the death of this lady, her daughter, the wife of an old Stirlingshire laird, carried Miss Hamilton home with her. The poor and proud dependant, who, although her friend and mistress was kind-hearted, was expected to make herself useful in a thousand ways, suffered countless mortifications.

At last she consented to accept the addresses of worthy Mr. Marshall, a peasant-born farmer of competent means, to whom Elizabeth Hamilton applied the sentence of Burns, that "he held his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God." Such a man was not likely to protest against the introduction of a little orphan niece to fill up pleasantly his honoured wife's leisure. He did not fail, for the thirty-two years of their union, to take a gentle pride in the child as giving life to the otherwise childless home. Elizabeth Hamilton repaid his generosity by as warm affection as daughter ever showed to father.

From Monday till Saturday little Elizabeth scampered up the steep streets of Stirling in order to sit in her place in Mr. Manson's school for boys and girls. There she learnt, first writing (she could already read well), geography, and the use of the globes, at the same time attending a dancing school; next French; and afterwards music on the harpsichord, and drawing. The spirited child had already taken advantage of her country rearing by "paidling"

in the burn in July, and sliding on its ice in December. She had yet other sources of education. She played "the ba'" under the shadow of Mar's Wark and Argyle's Lodging. On Wednesday afternoons, when she was tired of going to "the nuts" and "the blackberries" with the other school-girls, she climbed the Castle Rock and the Abbey Craig, and looked down on the silver Links of the Forth, the green walls of the Ochils, and the wooded vale of Strathmore, far away to the heathery wilds of Monteath and Balquidder, and the rugged blue line of the Grampians, with the towering peak of Benledi. She saw the battle-fields of Bannockburn, Sauchieburn, and Falkirk, as well as the more primitive fighting ground of the Carron, just at the time when Ossian, in the guise of Macpherson, or Macpherson in the guise of Ossian, was making the romantic world ring with the mighty deeds of Fingal. To little Elizabeth Hamilton the suggestive names of "the Bloody Field," "the King's Knot," "Ballingeich's Entry," and "Douglas's Room" were household words. Neither was she a stolid barn-

door child, to use them without association. The old-fashioned little woman, adopted by a childless, elderly couple, and without brothers or sisters to share the adoption, did more than take her patriotic fever betimes. While she had their high places lying stretched out at her feet, she read Blind Harry and Barbour with a will, and made heroes of Wallace and Robert the Bruce. At an exceptionally tender age she came across an English translation of the Iliad, and extended her regard liberally to Hector and Achilles.

Elizabeth, shrewd and sensible in her quaint baby wisdom, had at hand yet another branch of study, of which she was to become mistress. From the young maid-servant, Isabel Irvine, and her kindred, Elizabeth acquired an intimate knowledge of the turns of thought, the failings and prejudices, as well as the virtues, of Scotch peasant women.

Every Saturday night the child mounted joyfully her Dobbin, Lochaber, and rode home brimful of school stories. These she dispensed to her indulgent aunt and uncle in the parlour,

and to a not less sympathetic audience in the farm kitchen. Every Sabbath Elizabeth "sat" under an orthodox minister of the Kirk (though her uncle Marshall was an Episcopalian) during two long diets of public worship. After kirk-time she repeated to her aunt the psalms, the catechism, and the heads of the sermon, which were required from her, as from all well-brought-up young Presbyterians of her generation. The grown woman Elizabeth gave her testimony that the discipline was dry and injudiciously rigid, but not without its counterbalancing lessons in self-restraint, patience, and application.

At thirteen Elizabeth left school. She paid visits to Edinburgh and Glasgow, where she had lessons from masters. These visits supplied her with long-cherished memories of college friends, promenades on the Green, carpet dances, "with refreshments at the side-boards." Save for these interludes, the girl's life was not perfectly wholesome. It was a sedentary life. She was shut up with elderly people. One of her duties was to read aloud every evening for the

instruction and amusement of the little home circle. But more than this: Mrs. Marshall was so agreeably surprised by her niece's journal of a Highland tour, that the elder lady showed the manuscript to a friend, who sent it, without the author's knowledge, to a provincial magazine, in which it flourished duly. On the other hand, Elizabeth was cautioned by her aunt to restrain her love of reading; and one day, when on the point of being surprised by visitors, Elizabeth hid Kaimes' "Elements of Criticism" under a sofa cushion (is not the same story told of Fanny Burney?), lest she should be accused by her neighbours of pedantry. In revenge on herself and them, and in sheer dearth of intellectual interest, she took to writing a novel in letters secretly. It was historical, of course, for she had Stirling Castle in her eye; but it was not in old Scotch, for Elizabeth was anxious, at this time, to improve her English. She was, besides, a little frightened at the growing vulgarity of Scotland and the Scotch, to which no writer of eminence had turned his attention since Allan



Ramsay wrote his "Gentle Shepherd," which Mr. Mackenzie kept at the staff's end in his *Lounger*. Her historical period was no later than that of James VI.'s reign. She elected Arabella Stewart as her royal heroine, and transplanted the characters to England. With artlessness and girlish narrowness both of thought and feeling, Elizabeth sketched herself and her only sister, from whom she had been separated nearly all her life, in the sisters Almeria and Matilda. Elizabeth took care to bring up these minor heroines apart, and in the description of their meeting, and the rapid growth of their friendship, the young author sought to foreshadow her own coveted reunion with her sister and their sympathetic attachment.

Another premature, and possibly morbid, effect of this period was that a sceptic of the school of David Hume startled and disturbed Elizabeth's religious faith. It was only after the most searching investigations into the evidences of Christianity that the distressed and dismayed girl could return and rest in peace on the pro-



mises of the Gospel—never again to be disturbed.

Elizabeth's good principles, her calm sense and kindness of temper, prevented her, even at the age of eighteen, from making insurmountable bugbears of adverse circumstances. She was taught (and it was also instinctive in her) to keep intellectual efforts and attainments properly subordinate to moral practice. She had no craving to occupy a chill eminence above her companions, or to be pointed out as a rapt poetess, holding herself removed from notable housekeeping and darning. She was better educated than Miss Sukey Blamire; without the aristocratic pride of Miss Jean Elliot and of Lady Anne Barnard; and she was of stronger and broader, though perhaps less delicate, perceptions than Lady Nairne. Elizabeth Hamilton did not in the end refuse to acknowledge the gift that was in her; but, in her comparatively circumscribed youth, she did not dream of asserting her mental superiority to the people around her.

With a keen appreciation of intellectual

society, she still took the most cheerful view of the merits of the men and the women in her neighbourhood, and entered into life-long friendships with several of them. It was not till the close of her life, and in self-defence, that she admitted in a letter to Hector Macneil that during her early life in Scotland it had been her lot to encounter few who understood the commerce of intellect, and of these few almost none who would deign to exchange their precious ores for her unpolished pebbles. She afterwards spoke of the change which took place on her going to England, where her gifted and genial brother introduced her to his own associates. Men of learning and men of wit then addressed themselves to her freely, and both men and women of high position and talents treated her on terms of equality. She added humorously, that often she was inclined to quote the nursery rhyme, "Surely this is no me." It is worth while to note her youthful obscurity and her contentment with the fact, when one remembers that Elizabeth Hamilton was one of the first women who lived to redeem

the literary woman from her old, bad reputation of bearing only another name for an arrogant and domineering fool.

It was in Elizabeth's favour, too, that her home was in the country. Ingram's Crook, to which Mr. and Mrs. Marshall removed just as Elizabeth grew up, was a home of much rural beauty.

It is true that we are apt to doubt the existence of genuine admiration for nature at a time when writers were given to expressing such admiration in vague, grandiloquent terms, encumbered with much far-fetched classic imagery. As in the case of Alexander Ross, of Lochlee, the author of the "Fair Shepherdess," these writers have been known to spend the greater part of their lives amid strikingly picturesque scenes without a single reference to them stealing into the works which were composed under such influences. Nevertheless, beauty must have been a thing of beauty to the poet, and must have incorporated itself with his being, though he did not as a rule analyse it, and, after having pulled it to pieces, put into it his personality, and cause it to

smile with his hopes and sigh with his fears. The great exception to this paralysing self-restraint, prior to Wordsworth, was Burns, who in one of his songs records of his Jean,—

“ I see her in the dewy flowers,  
I see her sweet and fair ;  
I hear her in the tunefu’ birds,  
I hear her charm the air.”

Ingram’s Crook was a cottage with thatched roof, and walls covered with roses and honeysuckle. Its name had a chivalric association, derived from the gallant old English knight, Sir Ingram Umfraville, who, according to the legend, tried to ford the bend of the burn, and was drowned there in the rout after Bannockburn. It was a fit scene for love ; and the love was not the less sincere because it was that of an old wedded couple, gladdened by the devoted duty paid to them by a good and modest young girl. Nor is the song of “ My ain fire-side ” less true because it was written by a wise and benignant old maid of the garret, which is wont, after all, to look better on a close inspection than from a distance.

Both in the virtues and in the faults of her character,—in its sterling cheerfulness and friendliness, in its old-fashionedness and self-consciousness, as well as in its dash of conceit and sententiousness,—Elizabeth Hamilton, like the rest of the world, owed much to her original surroundings.

It had been a happy season for Elizabeth when her brother, five years her senior, came to Scotland to visit her and the rest of his relations there. She did not find him a less affectionate and playful companion because he was inclined to take a fatherly charge of his prim, yet roguish little sister. The brother and sister parted exchanging promises of correspondence, which they kept with “inviolable fidelity.”

It was a happier season still for Elizabeth when she resigned her fancy picture of the meeting with her sister to realise its glad fulfilment, and paid a long visit to her native Ireland. But the reunion, in each instance, was temporary. While the brother in the little family had already got a cadetship in India, the

lamented death of their aunt Marshall, shortly after Elizabeth's return, rendered her life at Ingram's Crook very solitary for a young woman. In her unselfish regard for her uncle's comfort, she tied herself down to her seat at the head of his table, in the chimney-corner, or in the window opposite to him, making light in his widowed home. She hardly ever quitted the old man till his death eight years after. Thus she spent ungrudgingly the flower of her age from her twenty-first to her twenty-ninth year.

The portraits of Elizabeth Hamilton represent her as a slight woman, wearing a shapeless gown, and round the throat such a frill as was sometimes worn in the latter half of the century. She has brown hair, curling over a full forehead; sleepy, yet arch eyes, under marked brows; a straight, large nose; and a soft mouth, with full under lip. The copious letter-writing in which she had already begun to indulge conveys the impression of a well-brought-up young lady, with remarkable clearness of discernment and soundness of judgment. Strong in her untried principles, and with a good deal of self-



satisfaction in that unshaken strength, she was, at the same time, a courageous, cordial, loving-hearted woman. In the sacrifice which she made of her youth in order to solace the old age of the man who had sheltered her childhood, virtue must have been its own reward; while vanity, too, had its sop. But Elizabeth's great source of refreshment ("a second education," as her biographer, Miss Benger, very correctly calls it) was her correspondence with her deservedly dear brother. The prospect of his return home towards the end of the period, covered, while still a young man, with scholarly distinction, and appointed for an honourable task, must have been very gratifying to Elizabeth.

That was the great age of letter-writing—we beg its pardon, of epistolary correspondence—and not of the frittered-away note-writing of to-day. Women, particularly, revelled in such an expression of their opinions and feelings. With a royal disregard to consequences, as well as to heavy postage, they threw themselves on the honour of their correspondents in giving



confidences. The eighteenth century reads better in its formal saws, its determined sprightliness, its airy little flights of sentiment, than the nineteenth will read in its conflicting duties, its complicated motives, its subtleties of analysis. The misfortune is that the fair letter-writers acquired a large resemblance in the practice of their art. There may be, of course, a little more laying down the law here, and of somewhat ponderous vivacity there; a more fatal plunge into bathos on this side, a more comical languishing and coquetting with her own graces, and with a sublime elation in her own laurels on that; but Lucy Aikin's letters might be Elizabeth Hamilton's, Fanny Burney's, Anna Grant's, almost down to Anna Seward's. Still, let us deal gently with these old letter-writers, Scotch and English. The Scotch, be it said, however, have decidedly the best of it, though they, too, want the inimitable freshness and lightness of their French sisters. The letters did not fail in fancy and feeling, however stiffened, spun out, and overlaid. They were written by good and gracious women,

faithfully fond daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers, who righteously discharged their obligations, and generously lavished their tenderness—the fragrance of whose works, done a hundred years ago, continues to embalm the workers' names.

Elizabeth Hamilton's earlier letters savour too much of "The Polite Letter-writer," and of "Elegant Extracts;" but there are indications of the benevolent wisdom which threw such a dignity round her in the end, and there are occasionally exquisite touches of human nature.

The absence of their Charles was all that marred Elizabeth's stay with her sister in Ireland. Elizabeth has a little aching fear that she has offended him by taking it upon her to give him good advice, and that he will think (in which he will not be entirely wrong) that he has got a little starched, cynical prude for a younger sister.

There is a pleasing chronicle of the family likeness, on account of which Elizabeth was called "little Charles" at Belfast; and the saucy

fling with which her aunt says, "Aweel, she's muckle better faured!" deserves to be remembered.

The letters abound in wistful wondering how he will look in the black beard which he has grown since they parted, and in conjuring up the old stripling figure playing on the flute, in the vain effort to attain one of the fashionable accomplishments of the day.

Cordial thanks are offered on one occasion for the gift of the muslin which "you mention for a wedding suit." But the thanks are accompanied by the bridling remark, that "if it is to be laid up for that occasion, I don't think it need be in any hurry; but if it arrive in safety, I shall perhaps use the freedom of wearing it beforehand." There are full particulars of the peaceful monotony of domestic life at Ingram's Crook—the quiet, but active mornings spent in farming and housekeeping; the quaint political discussions on the American war between the uncle and the niece at the one-o'clock dinner; the "rattle at the harpsichord;" the brisk game at backgammon; the sedate reading aloud

every evening from seven to eleven of history and travel, with now and then a favourite novel to excite a laugh—a custom not intermitted because she who had instituted it was no longer there to hear.

With a quiver of grateful delight, Elizabeth writes that, after she had gone through the agony of finding the ship in which she believed her brother had sailed, posted as “seen off Cuba in great distress,” she read at length the announcement of its having come into port, and discovered his name in the list of arrivals. She had become more composed by the time she referred to the two “young lady friends” who were keeping her company, and congratulating her on the prospect of her brother’s return. Though they were both resolved to “set their best hats at him” the moment he landed, they “would perhaps debate the propriety of sending their compliments to a young gentleman.”

It was during her life of deep seclusion, and almost complete banishment from society, that Elizabeth experienced such a shipwreck of her womanly hopes and eclipse of her womanly

dreams as compasses the wreck of many a woman's nature. There was a "lad" in the case, and there had been trysts by the Bannockburn, and partings by the white yett or gate of Ingram's Crook ; but there was to be no second version of the wedded love which Elizabeth had witnessed between her uncle and aunt. The troth-plight was broken ; the fond lover never became the faithful husband.

In similar circumstances there are women who think it no shame, but rather a kind of redeeming glory, to sink every other faith and blessing in the one faith and blessing which they have hopelessly lost. Elizabeth Hamilton was endowed with strength of character, and had been well educated ; and her misfortune had a different effect. She did not suffer as a Spartan woman might have suffered ; she did not hug her sorrow in her own brave breast ; but, like a Christian woman, she rose above it in every quality by the exercise of which she might help and cheer her fellow-creatures. It is in allusion to this great trial of her youth, that, in her old age, and with pathetic jest, she

reflects upon the huge mistake which was made by the dull, matter-of-fact friend who, deceived by Elizabeth's forced and feverish gaiety, pointed her out when she was really walking wearily in the dim darkness of her forlornness, as "a creature who could never be wae!"

With her brother's return occurred one of those crises when events crowd and jostle each other in an otherwise eventless history. Ingram's Crook was irradiated by Charles Hamilton's presence while he stayed at home and wrote his history of the Rohilla war. Then came Elizabeth's first visit along with him to London, where he went to settle, with the purpose of translating from the Persian the code of Mussulman laws—the arduous undertaking for which he had been so honourably chosen.

The dawn of a new life for Elizabeth was darkened by her uncle Marshall's death—the sudden snapping after long decay of an old man's life. The change involved Elizabeth's quitting Ingram's Crook and joining her brother, who had had five years' leave of absence granted him for his important task.



But long before this period had expired Charles Hamilton died an early death. His health had been undermined by a foreign climate and severe study ; and rapid consumption found him a ready prey. This was the great calamity of Elizabeth Hamilton's life. In allusion to it she said deliberately, " With him died my last hopes of earthly happiness." There was reason in what she said. Her youth was already gone ; one friend, who might have been " a nearer one still," had been weighed in the balance and found wanting ; and her sister had married and settled in Ireland. But Elizabeth was wont to record thankfully the gradual rising, above the sombre grey of the horizon, of new prospects in life, new interests, new friends, and new powers and sources of usefulness. In the midst of premature infirmity and confirmed bad health, she was fain to look back and reckon up humbly what had been the numerous blessings of her lot, and to praise God for " every year " being " happier than the last."

In the end the family difficulties of Mrs. Blake (Katherine Hamilton) became such as rendered



it desirable that she should reside with Elizabeth. From that time the sisters lived together, staying for four years after their brother's death either in Suffolk or in Berkshire. The two women were a comfort to each other, leading almost as quiet and purely domestic a life as that of Elizabeth and her uncle Marshall at Ingram's Crook. If youth had carried away with it its buoyant hopes, no less than its tumult of bliss and anguish, the sisters were now slowly recovering from the blow which had stunned them ; learning more perfectly the great lesson of resignation, and regaining heart for venturing once more in the world's business.

Charles Hamilton had occasionally urged on his bosom friend and dearest sister Bess, that the pleasure and the profit which she diffused by her personal influence, she might diffuse still more widely by writing. In 1785 she had sent a contribution to *The Lounger*, which was received and accepted by the editor without any knowledge of the author. Partly in obedience to her brother's wishes, partly under the influence of Dr. Gregory and the members of his

family, with whom she had latterly become acquainted, she published in succession her novels of "The Hindoo Rajah" and "The Modern Philosophers," and her popular tale, "The Cottagers of Glenburnie." These books had decided merit, and did their work in their day. "The Cottagers of Glenburnie," the most unpretending of the three, lives still. Isabel Irvine's little mistress of the Stirling school-days had grown a middle-aged literary woman; and not simply a literary woman, but an enlightened philanthropist. She recalled the Isabel Irvines of her youth, with their stumbling-blocks and fetters, and contrasted these unfavourably (as Mary Berry did on visiting Scotland) with what she believed to be the greater advantages, in social respects, enjoyed by the better specimens of English labourers' families with which she had come in contact during her sojourn in the south. She wrote "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" with a will, for the benefit of her humbler countrywomen. To her credit and to theirs, the tale did wonders in remedying the evil she condemned—the fatal

*vis inertia* of "I canna be fashed," which lingers, now, chiefly as a tradition of darker ages. Not without its pleasant side is the anecdote that the veritable Isabel Irvine, whom her young mistress had taken pains to instruct and train, lived to read "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" in a copy sent to her by the author. Nay, more, it is on record that Isabel lent out her copy at "a penny the read;" thus, Scotchwoman-like, not only glorying in spreading her old mistress's fame and usefulness, but having an eye to her own private interest in the transaction.

The publication of her books brought Elizabeth Hamilton—become Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton—with honour on the stage of literature. She and her sister now settled at Bath. The brilliant Bath of Jane Austen and Fanny Burney was familiar to Elizabeth, through listening in girlhood to the reminiscences of her aunt Marshall, who had lived there in her office of "humble companion" during the palmiest days of the great English watering-place. Aunt Marshall had loved to recall Bath and its cele-

brities, when time had plucked the personal sting from their associations.

Elizabeth Hamilton lived and wrote during an interregnum in letters both in England and Scotland. In England, Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Sir Joshua, Garrick, and their set had passed away; William Cowper, in his self-banishment at Olney, and Hayley, little dreaming that he would be forgotten in a single generation, save for his vanity and his friendships, were only inaugurating the next great *régime* of Scott, Byron, Moore, Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth. The London where Elizabeth Hamilton received her tribute of praise had just seen the last of the highly majestic queens of letters—Mrs. Montague and Mrs. Chapone. Mrs. Barbauld was laying down the sceptre, and consenting to be private and homely. Still more unassuming was Mrs. Barbauld's gentle, well-informed niece, Lucy Aikin. Joanna Baillie was of the same generation, and so was Madame D'Arblay, when she managed to come across from France at intervals, before she settled finally in her native country. Amongst

these ladies, Horace Walpole's favourite, Mary Berry, flitted now and then like a star from another sphere — not without a suspicion of wilfulness and condescension when she found herself at any time in the act of leaving Strawberry Hill for Hampstead. Elizabeth Hamilton was on friendly terms with the most of her compeers. She was particularly friendly with her countrywoman, Joanna Baillie—to whom she could talk, among other things, of old Glasgow, its college and green.

It was not till 1803, nearly ten years after the death of her brother, that Elizabeth Hamilton ended a long, rambling, enjoyable tour of the English lakes by revisiting Scotland. Her journey was in some respects a triumphal progress. She had before this published the "Letters on Education," which won the approbation of Dugald Stewart, and was now engaged in writing, from restricted sources, the "Memoirs of Agrippina." A few months' residence in Edinburgh, with the "open sesame" Elizabeth Hamilton possessed to its most cultivated society, so delighted her, that having no par-

ticular tie to England, she made up her mind to remove thither with her sister. In George Street, Edinburgh, instead of in Bath, their home was fixed from this time.

Edinburgh was no longer the Edinburgh which Burns found it—when Robertson and Blair were the censors of literature, when stately Lord Glencairn and queer Lord Buchan were his patrons, and Jane, Duchess of Gordon, his hostess. Neither was it yet the Edinburgh when Sir Walter made a summer of winter in Castle Street, nor when Wilson, Hogg, and young Lockhart perpetrated the Chaldean manuscript. Dugald Stewart was there; so were Playfair and Alison; and there was some word of an accomplished young Mr. Scott, who, although he walked the Parliament House, had begun housekeeping at Lasswade. Mrs. Brunton, a minister's wife in the city, was taking advantage of the more liberal days in the Kirk to write "Self-Control," without bringing scandal upon her husband. Mrs. Grant of Laggan had migrated from the "mountains" to the town. A "long," awkward woman, with



the affectation of a drawl, and with a difficulty in hearing, she was gifted with a comprehensive mind and a warm heart. Mrs. Cockburn no longer presided over her piquant suppers, or issued her *bons mots* and squibs, like an old Frenchwoman of quality. Lady Anne Lindsay had long flown to London, and was on the eve of a farther flight to the Cape of Good Hope. Mrs. Keith Murray had vanished in the shades of Balcarres. Of all the old notabilities, only dignified Miss Jean Elliot, of the Minto family, remained. She still resided in her house in Brown Square, and went out for an airing in her sedan-chair.

Elizabeth Hamilton immediately took rank among the wisest and best of a select company. The Government, to its credit, granted her an annuity. For twelve years, amid fast-failing health, she was engaged in every intellectual, charitable, and truly religious enterprise of old Edinburgh. After she was a complete invalid and largely a prisoner in her own room, until her death at Harrogate in 1816, in her fifty-ninth year, her house was a chosen meeting-



place for all those engaged in higher objects. In the end, Elizabeth Hamilton had gone to England for change of air and scene, which had often proved beneficial to her before, but was powerless then. Unpretending and reverent in her religious profession always, her death was in keeping with her life. She set her house in order—what was left of it for her thus to set—resigned herself into God's hands, imploring his pardon through his Son, and looking to Him for glory, honour, and immortality. She blessed her friends—the oldest and kindest of them, her sister—and died peacefully.

Elizabeth Hamilton, with her fortitude and stanchness, strenuously defended castle-building from the strictures with which it has been visited by many Christian moralists. She alleged that imagination was not sufficiently cultivated as a moral power and safeguard (she might have added, as a great element of faith); and that by allowing oneself to picture what one would be—above all, in character and act—there might be an excellent balance maintained against inordinate self-esteem. But per-

haps few girls indulge the speculation which caused Elizabeth to write in her youth at Ingram's Crook :—

“And straight I in the glass surveyed  
 An antique maiden much decayed,  
 Whose languid eye and pallid cheek  
 The conquering power of time bespeak.  
 But though deprived of youthful bloom,  
 Free was my brow from peevish gloom.  
 A cap, though not of modern grace,  
 Hid my grey hairs, and deck'd my face.  
 No more I fashion's livery wear,  
 But cleanly neatness all my care.  
 Whoe'er had seen me must have said,  
 There goes one cheerful, pleased old maid.”

Perhaps as few old women have lightened heavy hours inflicted on them by chronic gout in employing their crippled hands to write such cheery welcomes to old age as this :—

“Is that Auld Age that's tirling at the pin ?  
 I trow it is—then haste to let him in.  
 Ye're kindly welcome, frien' ; sae dinna fear  
 To show yoursel', ye'll cause nae trouble here.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 But far frae shirking ye as a disgrace,  
 Thankfu' I am to have lived to see your face ;  
 Nor sall I e'er disown ye, nor tak pride  
 To think how long I micht your visit hide ;

Doing my best to mak ye weel respektet,  
 I'll no fear for your sake to be neglectet.  
 But now ye're come, and through a' kind o' weather,  
 We're doomed frae this time forth to jog thegither;  
 I'd fain mak compact wi' ye firm and strong,  
 On terms o' fair giff-gaff to haud out long;  
 Gin thou'lt be civil, I sall liberal be:  
 Witness the lang, lang list of what I'll gie.  
 First, then, I here mak ower for gude and aye  
 A' youthfu' fancies, whether bright or gay;  
 Beauties and graces too I wad resign them,  
 But sair I fear 't wad cost ye fash to fin' them,  
 For 'gainst your daddy Time they couldna stand,  
 Nor bear the grip o' his unsonsy hand.  
 But there's my skin, whilk ye may further crunkle,  
 And write your name at length in ilka wrunkle;  
 On my brown locks ye've leave to lay your paw,  
 And bleach them to your fancy, white as snaw;  
 But lookna, Age, sae wistfu' at my mouth,  
 As gin ye langed to pu' out ilka tooth;  
 Let them, I do beseech, still keep their places,  
 Though gin ye wish't, ye're free to paint their faces.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
 I ken by that fell glower and meaning shrug  
 Ye'd slap your skinny fingers on each lug;  
 And now fain ye are, I trow, and keen,  
 To cast your misty powders in my e'en;  
 But O, in mercy spare my poor wee twinklers,  
 And I for aye sall wear your crystal blinkers.  
 Then 'bout my lugs I'd fain a bargain mak,  
 And gie my hand that I sall ne'er draw back.  
 Weel, then—wad ye consent their use to share,  
 'T wad serve us baith, and be a bargain rare.

Thus I wad hae't when babbling fools intrude  
Gabbling their noisy nonsense lang and loud,  
Or when ill-nature, weel brushed up by wit  
Or sneer sarcastic, taks its aim to hit ;  
Or when detraction, meanest slave o' pride,  
Spies out wee fauts and seeks great worth to hide,  
Then mak me deaf—as deaf as deaf can be,  
At sic a time my lugs I lend to thee.  
But when in social hour ye see combined  
Genius and wisdom—fruits o' heart and mind,  
Good sense, good humour, wit in playfu' mood,  
And candour e'en frae ill extracting good,  
Oh ! then, auld frien', I maun hae back my hearing,  
To want it then would be an ill past bearing.

\* \* \* \*

Nae matter—hale and soun' I'll keep my heart,  
Nor frae a crumb o' 't sall I ever part,  
Its kindly warmth will ne'er be chilled by a'  
The cauldest breath your frozen lips can blaw :  
Ye needna fash your thumb, auld carle, nor fret,  
For there affection sall preserve its seat,  
And though to tak my hearing ye rejoice,  
Yet spite o' you I'll still hear friendship's voice ;  
Thus though ye tak the rest, it sha'na grieve me,  
For ae blythe spunk o' spirits ye maun leave me.  
And let me tell ye in your lug, Auld Age,  
I'm bound to travel wi' ye but ae stage ;  
Be't long or short, ye canna keep me back,  
An' when we reach the end o' 't, ye maun pack,  
For there we part for ever, late or ear'  
Another gude companion meets me there,  
To whom ye—will he, nill he—maun me bring ;  
Nor think that I'll be wae, and laith to spring

Frae your poor dozened side, ye carle uncouth,  
 To the blest arms of everlasting youth.  
 By time whate'er ye've rilled, stow'n, or ta'en,  
 Will a' be gi'en wi' interest back again.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now a's tauld

Let us set out upon our journey cauld  
 Wi' nae vain boasts, nor vain regrets tormented,  
 We'll e'en jog on the gate, quiet and contented."

So Elizabeth Hamilton raises her cracked voice to greet old age, as she reads aloud these lines to her little family circle in George Street.

Her last work, written a year before her death, was "Hints to the Patrons and Directors of Public Schools." Taking up the system of Pestalozzi, she urged, as she had done in her "Letters on Education," the cultivation of metaphysics as the foundation of education. "Sound good sense," modesty, and kindness "eminently characterised" her prose writings. In some respects she forms, in them, a link between Hannah More and Miss Edgeworth.

It was on Elizabeth Hamilton's return home, after an absence of six months, during which she had, at the pressing request of a nobleman,

presided for a season over his motherless family, that in the exhilaration of her restoration to her "ain folk," she wrote "My ain fireside."

This song, which is the "Home, sweet Home" of Scotland, has peculiar and individual merits. "Home, sweet Home" is more local, and yet it is more vague in its very sentimentality. "My ain fireside" is the fervent utterance of Scotch independence, and of affection concentrated into a few rugged channels. Elizabeth Hamilton, as shown in her song, had the aristocratic bias and the enthusiastic loyalty of her countrymen, but her purely human instinct was very much stronger. She was faithful to that "blude" which "is thicker than water," and to the perfect regard which friendship ought to mean. Though she was what the world of her day would have called "a polite woman," she had a true and warm-hearted woman's detestation of form, for form's sake, and for every shade of guile and hypocrisy. She had a gracious woman's bountiful gladness when gladness is meet; and she had withal something of the poet's suggestive appropriateness of epithet

and figure, as seen in her line of the “bonnie blythe blink o’ my ain fireside.” As with poets generally, her enjoyment was keen in proportion to the sharpness of her pain: she had known the happiness which is so great that it brings tears into the eyes, and points back inevitably to the days and the sorrows which are gone—but not forgotten, their mark and their fruit being left behind them. It only remains to be said that “My ain fireside” has shared the plague of popularity, having grown or fallen into many different versions since its author wrote it.

---

### MY AIN FIRESIDE.

OH! I hae seen great anes, and sat in great ha’s,  
‘Mong lords and ‘mong ladies a’ covered wi’ braws;  
At feasts made for princes, wi’ princes I’ve been,  
Where the grand shine o’ splendour has dazzled my e’en;  
But a sight sae delightfu’, I trow, I ne’er spied,  
As the bonnie blythe blink o’ my ain fireside.  
My ain fireside, my ain fireside,  
O cheery’s the blink o’ my ain fireside.

My ain fireside, my ain fireside,  
O there’s nought to compare wi’ my ain fireside.



Ance mair, Gude be praised, round my ain heartsome  
ingle,

Wi' the friends o' my youth I cordially mingle ;  
Nae forms to compel me to seem wae or glad,  
I may laugh when I'm merry, and sigh when I'm sad ;  
Nae falsehood to dread, and nae malice to fear,  
But truth to delight me, and friendship to cheer ;  
Of a' roads to happiness ever were tried,  
There's nane half so sure as ane's ain fireside.

My ain fireside, my ain fireside,  
O there's nought to compare wi' my ain fireside.

When I draw in my stool on my cosy hearthstane,  
My heart louns sae light I scarce ken't for my ain ;  
Care's down on the wind, it is clean out o' sight,  
Past troubles they seem but as dreams o' the night.  
There but kind voices, kind faces I see,  
And mark saft affection glent fond frae ilk e'e ;  
Nae fleechings o' flattery, nae boastings o' pride,  
'Tis heart speaks to heart, at ane's ain fireside.

My ain fireside, my ain fireside,  
O there's nought to compare wi' ane's ain fireside.

END OF VOL. I.

THE SONGSTRESSES OF SCOTLAND

TWO VOLS.—II.



# THE SONGSTRESSES OF SCOTLAND

By SARAH TYTLER AND J. L. WATSON

TWO VOLS.—II.



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## LADY ANNE BARNARD.

1750—1825.

LADY ANNE BARNARD came of one of the most lordly lines in Scotland. On the Lindsays' side she was descended from the bold barons of Crawford, Spynie, and Balcarres. Reckoning by both sides of the house, she was "the daughter of a hundred earls."

Her birth at Balcarres in 1750 had been looked forward to by the Jacobites as the fulfilment of a prophecy, that the first child of the last descendant of so loyal a house would restore the exiled Stuarts. But, as Lady Anne herself records with great glee, wizards, witches, bards, fortune-tellers, and old ladies were covered with confusion by the arrival of a daughter—only a daughter—at what the Lindsays were fond of calling the *château*, which

had been rendered poverty-stricken by fines and forfeitures.

The country-seat of Balcarres, that proved so wonderfully capacious in after years when Mistress Cockburn was one of its occupants, was very old-fashioned. It was situated not very far from that succession of Dutch-like towns on the Fife coast which, before their prosperity fell under the death-blow of the Union, one of the King Jamies had sharply characterised as "a golden fringe to a beggar's mantle." But the beggar's mantle part of the comparison was hardly fair to the sheltered and cultivated strath which extended from Largo Bay to the East Neuk. Balcarres lay midway in the strath, backed by its Craig and the Hill of Rires, and facing the sea frith which brought "the wind of God" fresh from the German Ocean. Between the nest of the Lindsays and the bare coast, there basked in the sunshine, and cowered a little in the keen frost of the region, farms and woods, a blue loch, and two drowsy hamlets. In the west, with the sun setting behind it, was the green sandy

Law of Largo, out of the shadow of which Sir Andrew Wood had sailed his yellow carvel and cleared the frith of English boats. In the east was the round hummock of Kelly Law. Close to this was the castle of the musical Earl of Kelly—the early home of Lady Betty, Lady Ann, and Lady Christian Erskine, good friends and neighbours of the Lindsays. A little nearer stood the quaint, steep little village and exquisite church of St. Monans, with Balcaskie House and Newark Castle, where, after the '15, Earl James of Balcarres had been hidden by the aid of one of the young ladies of the Anstruther family. Another Anstruther, Sir John, of Elie House, married, in the same year that Lady Anne Barnard was born, the famous beauty and wit, Jenny Faa, a daughter of the gipsy merchant of Dunbar. Between Balcarres and Elie were the village, the estate, and the house of Kinneuchar, on their Loch Bethune, the laird of which having been present at a public dinner and compelled to drink as a toast the health of William, Duke of Cumberland, rose up and proposed the health of Sib-

bald, the butcher in Colinsburgh, swearing that as he had drunk his friends' butcher, they should drink his butcher. Farther off, in the Largo direction, was the white house on the hill of the Grange, the lairds of which, the Malcolms, had been once and again humble allies of the Lindsays—a Malcolm having been with Earl Alexander in Holland, and another (whose wife, herself an earl's daughter, had supported his family by spinning and selling thread in his absence) with Earl James at St. Germain.

Lady Anne, like Lady Grisell Baillie, was the eldest of many children; and, like Miss Jean Elliot, she belonged to a family whose literary bent was as ancient as the days of Sir David of the Mount and of "old Pittscottie." Earl James, Lady Anne's father, having himself written a history of his house, laid on his family the injunction that a son or a daughter in each generation should carry on the record. A pleasant fruit of this injunction survives in Lady Anne's sketches of her youth and of the friends by whom she was surrounded. These sketches are included in the "Lives of the Lindsays."

Earl James, who died at seventy-seven, when his eldest daughter was seventeen years of age, had seen service both by sea and land; but his own and his father's share in the '15 spoilt his promotion. He was grey and gaunt, somewhat of a Baron Bradwardine, though more accomplished than learned. In his brigadier wig and gouty shoe he lost his heart at Moffatt to fat, fair, severely sensible Miss Dalrymple, who in her twenty-third year was nearly young enough to have been his grand-daughter. The Earl proposed. Miss Dalrymple said nay. The Earl, more or less of an invalid all his life, fell sicker than usual under his disappointment, and made his will. Having no near relations, with great dignity and magnanimity he left his obdurate mistress half his slender fortune. But the Earl did not die then; and Miss Dalrymple, hearing of the deed, was smitten to the heart, and became the energetic Countess, the over-anxious, imperious mother of eleven spirited children. The eight sons and the three daughters were no sinecure of a charge even to so strict a disciplinarian as the buxom, bloom-

ing Countess. They were for ever breaking out of nurseries and school-rooms to commit raids in the domains of Mammy Bell, the old house-keeper; often carrying the war into the garden or the offices. The Countess would inflict chastisements, not by proxy, but with her own little white hand, which, as Lady Anne bore testimony, could strike hard. Lady Balcarres found variety in her subjects; and some of them were stiff-necked enough. "Oh, my lady, my lady!" cried Robert, plain and practical always, "whip me and let me go if you please." Her little son John, who lived to be the prisoner of Hyder Ali in Seringapatam, told Lady Balcarres, when she took a plaything from him because of a fault, "Woman, I told you I would do the same thing, and I'll do the same to-morrow again." To-morrow came, and he kept his word. He was whipped, and another plaything withdrawn; but the sun shone warm: "Ah!" said he, "here is a fine day; my mother cannot take *it* from me."

Lady Balcarres led her children no easy life in return for their contumacy. What with



whipping, imprisonment in dark closets, fasting, and doses of rhubarb administered impartially to all the culprits, according to their offences—from tearing of frocks and breeches to running away—the Countess did not shirk her duty.

“Odsfish, madam!” remonstrated the worthy old Earl, “you will break the spirits of my young troops. I will not have it so.”

But no spirits were broken where earnestness and affection formed the foundation of the despotism. Little, blue-eyed, golden-haired Lady Margaret, who had the precocious infirmity of sighing and hanging her cherub head in her nursery because nobody loved her, was cured for the time of her morbid pining. As for generous, joyous Lady Anne—the “sister Anne” and “Annie” of that great circle—she was the hardest to punish of them all; for she ate and drank bread and water with complete philosophy, and would ask the butler to give her a bit of oat-cake out of mere pleasure in the change.

The healthy Spartan children had many pleasures which are out of the reach of their daintily-bred brothers and sisters of to-day.



These old Balcarres children were allowed a large amount of personal freedom in rambling and scrambling. They could wade in the burn which flowed through Balcarres Den; the sisters in tucked-up yellow and silver silk frocks with gauze flounces, manufactured, to suit the children's needs, out of part of the marriage finery of Lady Balcarres. They could pay daily visits to the farm-yard, looking in on their familiar friends of oxen, swine, and pigeons. They could sit on lazy cows' backs, devouring turnips for the sitters' own share, and scattering grain to obsequious cocks and hens. They had a Sunday rest from all tasks, save the repetition of so many verses of a psalm and attendance at the parish kirk; and they had a Sunday dinner at my lord's and my lady's table, winding up with a fatherly treat of sweetmeats.

The solid rudiments of knowledge were imparted alike to boys and girls by a reverend and absent-minded tutor. The airy superstructure of womanly accomplishments in Ladies Anne, Margaret, and Elizabeth was reared by the most inntastic of indigent gentlewomen, "the least

little woman that ever was seen for nothing,"—Henrietta Cumming. Not only as Lady Anne's governess, but as the "Sylph," and favoured "Hen," "Henny," and "Hennife," of Mistress Cockburn's correspondence, this curious little lady deserves yet another paragraph.

She was found by Lady Balcarres weeping and painting butterflies in the garret of an Edinburgh lodging-house, which was kept by her aunt. She had persuaded herself of her descent from the Red Comyn himself, and was possibly brought to Balcarres partly as a speculation, partly as an act of charity. Henrietta sang sweetly, wrote letters which Mistress Cockburn compared, for want of another simile, to the letters of Rousseau, and worked, as has been recorded, at mantua-making, millinery, and ruffles, for which she could draw elegant designs in flowers and birds. The Countess had thoughts of setting the reduced lady to instruct her daughters in these branches, and causing her to mess with my lady's maid, whose origin was doubtless no lower than that of a country manse or parish

school-house. But Henrietta turned the tables on the strong-willed Countess. By lavish tears and persistent starvation, she found her way to the family dinner-table. By her opposition to what she called Lady Balcarres' "haughty and unprovoked misrepresentation" of the act of friendship by which she condescended to teach the little ladies, and her spurning of a salary, she established herself for half a lifetime in Lord Balcarres' crowded household on terms of comparative equality. Not only so; she got from the good, burdened man a legacy on his death, and what was more unjustifiable, procured, through his influence, during his life, a pension from Government. Henrietta's pride, which would not let her take wages for her work, did not prevent her from accepting public alms to which she does not seem to have had the shadow of a title, unless in the fact that she painted a gown for Queen Charlotte. Yet the little woman, sharp-tongued when she could let her tongue out, was one of those characters in whom the falseness, supposing she proved herself false, and the truth were about equally

balanced. They deceive themselves almost as much as they deceive others. She was not only fascinating, because she was pretty and clever, and possessed a simplicity as real as it was affected, but in the midst of her calculating worldliness, and in defiance of it, she could be magnanimous, and was devotedly attached to her friends.

Although Henrietta's offices were detrimental in some respects, she shared in full the Lindsays' love of letters. She was capable of at least joining the two elder sisters in their voyages of discovery in the old library, where, according to Lady Anne, they had leave "to drive through the sea of books without pilot or rudder." The girls were free to lug down whatever musty volumes took their fancy. The desultory knowledge and accomplishments which they thus acquired were remarkable. It is as if the old Lindsays had found a "royal road to mathematics." This is proved when we sing Lady Anne's ballad, and read her letters, and hear how Lady Margaret translated Bürger's "Leonore" in fair verse, while Lady Elizabeth did

the same service for Tasso's "Gerusalemme Liberata."

Lady Anne was old enough to be her father's companion by the time that Lord Cummerland, the son and heir, had finished his studies at St. Andrew's University, and the Honourables Robert, Colin, James, William, Charles, John, and Hugh were being sent, in the earlier relays, to attend the college in Edinburgh, prior to becoming "a family of soldiers." Lady Anne was the Earl's amused young associate in his self-imposed obligation of compiling the family chronicles. One of her earliest recollections was seeing him receive a huge bundle of papers, wrapped in a plaid, from the Laird of Macfarlane, the ugliest chieftain, with the reddest nose, whom the child had ever seen.

Lady Anne is said to have imbibed her father's disposition, and she certainly profited by his honourable, shrewd, yet fond advice to his two girls, who were of an age to understand him. He counselled them to be good and mild, cheerful and complaisant. He told them that men loved such companions as could help to make them

gay and easy; and for this end fair nymphs should provide chains as well as nets in order to secure victims as well as acquire them. He bade them have the Muses as well as the Graces to aid Nature, which had been very good to his "Annie" and his "dear Peg" (budding beauties and wits of sixteen and fourteen). After insisting on the advantages of music, and of the Italian language in the service of music, and after urging the claims of books and religion, he declared that as much of philosophy as concerned the moral virtues would help to make them happy, even if they were "condemned" to be old maids. If they became wives, he urged them to be amiable. This was the best instrument for gaining power, as their husbands would have more pleasure in pleasing them than in pleasing themselves. Finally, he held up for the example of his daughters the two traditional models of virtuous womanhood among the Lindsays—Earl James's respected aunt, Lady Sophia, and his dear sister, Lady Betty—declaring with faith, which was touching in its child-likeness, "whom I wish to em-



brace you kindly in another world when you have had enough of this." As a fitting commentary on their old father's advice, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret were daily witnesses of his tender gallantry towards their mother, which was but the quintessence of his tender gallantry towards all women. He delighted to ride across the country, bearing a busy dame's commissions. Having on one occasion caught an old woman, his pensioner, in the act of helping herself to his cherished turnips, he scolded her hotly for the liberty, receiving no answer but her curtseys. When she did speak she made the audacious request, "Eh! my lord, they're unco heavy; will ye no gie me a lift?" and he followed up his scolding by hoisting the sack on her back.

But a multitude of influences helped to mould young Lady Anne. The Balcarres of her day was rich in inhabitants. It could muster fifty members of its own household at a ball, and its household was peculiarly rich in character. Old Lady Dalrymple, the children's grandmother, was comparatively of a soft and sleepy



order of womankind. In her own house in Edinburgh she came down every morning in search of the key which hung upon her finger. But very different was Miss Soph Johnstone, whose rough voice sung at its highest pitch—

“Eh, quo’ the tod, it’s a braw licht nicht,  
The wind’s in the west, and the mune shines bricht.”

The clatter of the private forge she had erected in her bed-room, the caw of the rooks, and the gurgle of the shattered and repaired Venus *jet d’eau* in the garden, were the notable sounds on a quiet day at old Balcarres. Soph, the Laird of Hilton’s daughter, came to pay a visit to Lady Balcarres on her marriage. She remained for thirteen years, taking up in succession each child till it was out of long clothes. She was only true to her first love in the person of Lady Anne. But Soph’s partisanship was a fatal distinction. Lady Anne’s admission to the sanctum of the forge, and her installation into the mysteries of fancy horseshoe-making, awoke Henrietta Cumming’s jealous resentment, and alienated the governess entirely from her eldest pupil. There

was an inevitable enmity between rude, fierce Soph Johnstone, and suave, capricious Henrietta Cumming. Lady Anne's first exercise of tact was in trying to maintain peace between the two belligerents, and to make them both happy. For it was the necessity of a gay, pleasure-loving nature, even in girlhood, to have all around her happy. It remains to the credit of Lady Anne that from youth to age she spared no trouble and grudged no pains for this end, and that she was in general as incapable of bearing malice against her neighbours as of fancying herself slighted by them. But this satisfaction in the contentment of her fellow-creatures did not prevent her from playing mischievous pranks on them, especially when she was instigated and backed by her trusty ally, Lady Margaret. One of their worst tricks was their writing and forwarding a letter, purporting to be from a rich cousin who had lately returned from abroad, to no less a person than Soph Johnstone, soliciting her company for a long visit. Miss Soph was completely deceived. She wrote and despatched a letter of

acceptance, gave out her clothes to be mended, ordered a new wig, and explained to her young friends, with a certain sober softening down of her eccentricities, the motives of her departure. The giddy girls stood aghast at what they had done; and the consequences of their escapade frightened them out of such practical joking. There arose upon them a late sense of the piteous contrast between their own circumstances and those of their victim. Before she should have dismantled her forge, they rushed to her room with a full confession of their delinquency, and made earnest promises not to offend in a like manner again. Throwing themselves on Soph's masculine scorn of anything like petty recrimination, and relying on her bark being worse than her bite for all young people's folly, they experienced clemency at her hand.

Lady Anne in her youth was not confined to Balcarres. The rock of the Bass, which resembled "a huge whale" rising out of the water opposite the *château* windows, was hardly the most suggestive object in the sweep

of the frith. Dancing eyes, with plenty of speculation in them, would often wander in the direction of the ferry of Kinghorn. Beyond the ferry lay Edinburgh, the metropolis, where the Lindsays had not only an indulgent grandmother, but hosts of cousins and allies. Among those kinsmen and friends, "Annie," "sister Anne," "charming Lady Anne," with her instinctive *savoir-faire*, her good-humour, and overbrimming fun and feeling, must have been immensely popular. The Lindsays, on their side, were strongly drawn to their cousins, when, in the end, Cummerland married a Dalrymple, and Robert a Dick.

An aunt of Lady Anne's, a figure more picturesque than engaging, lived in the Lawnmarket, where Burns had his lodging. This was the Dowager Countess of Balcarres, Margaret of Scotstarvet, who had the blood of the wizard of Balweary in her veins. A scantily provided-for widow, she hoarded her jointure to relieve the embarrassments of her husband's brother's children. She used to walk out, in order to visit the younger Lady Balcarres, dressed in a

large black silk bonnet projecting over her face, a black gown, and a white apron. She always carried a staff in her hand.

A favourite haunt of Lady Anne's was the old Earl of Selkirk's house in Hyndford Place, which was then occupied by Dr. Rutherford, Sir Walter Scott's grandfather. Lady Anne played on the Misses Rutherfurds' harpsichord, and sang her ballads to the accompaniment. Behind the screen, with the harlequin and columbine, Lady Anne chatted with her cronies—the Misses Rutherford, and Miss Hepburn of Congalton. Miss Jeanie Rutherford boasted to Lady Anne of the wonderful bairn, her nephew in George Square.

At the assemblies, when Lady Margaret was selected to dance in the Beauty set, Lady Anne would by no means decline on that account to stand up next in the Heartsome set; while both the sisters might figure together in the Maiden set.

The theatre was a resort of the Lindsays. Its audience was then so aristocratic, and the members so well known to each other,

that it presented many of the features of a county gathering. Thus, when Lord Balcarres died, as Mistress Cockburn wrote, the news of my lord's death thinned the play-house till after the funeral. Lady Anne must have improved scores of opportunities of "crying her eyes out" over *Jane Shore* and *The Gamester*, and of "laughing till she was fit to drop" at *The Provoked Husband* and *The Beaux' Stratagem*.

In her own home, at assembly or play-house, Lady Anne could scarcely have helped coming across a quiet, middle-aged woman of her own rank, and a family connection—Miss Jean Elliot—although it was not till long years afterwards that the apparently sober-minded woman was found guilty of writing an extremely romantic and doleful ballad.

Notwithstanding the natural attractions of Edinburgh, the Lindsays were judiciously taught to consider that no spot on earth had superior attractions to Balcarres, and that no reasonable being ought to be other than perfectly happy there. The extremely low condition of the family purse rendered it impossible that they



could take frequent excursions, even within the modest limits of driving twenty miles in the Balcarres coach to the Kinghorn ferry, and of hiring a pinnace, and having themselves rowed across the tossing barrier. It might be one great secret of the success of these Lindsays that they early learnt self-denial, and that they stood shoulder to shoulder throughout their history. Lord Cumberland, living on his pay, supplemented his brothers' and sisters' allowances. The Honourable Robert bestowed the gains arising from his trading, in a gift of fifteen hundred pounds, to purchase his brother James's majority, and employed any sums realised by him in England in helping to pay off the debt on the Balcarres estate.

The Lindsays trace their descent from a Norman line. Their "lightness" is French, and so is their form of family affectionateness, with its power of accommodating itself to varying tastes and tempers, from youth to age. One hears of the hereditary reddish-golden hair, and that too can be proved to be Norman—of the purest water. Lady Margaret, the beauty of



Lady Anne's generation, had the golden hair, the eyes of "heavenly blue," the dazzling fairness of skin, the Grecian nose, and the fine turn of the head and throat, on which her elder sister lovingly enlarges. It would seem that Lady Anne bore more resemblance to the Lindsay who was her immediate predecessor, the gay but gaunt earl. If, however, she was not beautiful, she was very elegant and graceful, with all the "presence," animation, and piquancy which are the most irresistible weapons of many a high-bred belle.

As beauties are given to marry, Lady Margaret at the age of eighteen, married Mr. Fordyce of Roehampton, and went with him to England. Lady Anne, two years older, missed her sister's presence much. She tried to fill up the blank in her life at Balcarres by scribbling prose and verse on the covers of old letters. Her little room up the steep winding stair commanded a view of the loch and the frith, and she was now often occupied in it. In these circumstances, as she wrote long afterwards to Sir Walter Scott, she composed "Auld Robin Gray."

There was an old Scotch air (not, however, the air to which the song is now sung, for that we owe to an English clergyman) of which Lady Anne was very fond, and which Soph Johnstone was in the habit of singing to words which were far from choice. It struck Lady Anne that she could supply the air with a tale of virtuous distress in humble life, with which all could sympathise. Robin Gray was the name of a shepherd at Balcarres, who was familiar to the children of the house. He had once arrested them in their flight to an indulgent neighbour's. Lady Anne revenged this arrest by seizing the old man's name, and preventing it from passing into forgetfulness. While she was in the act of heaping misfortunes on the heroine Jeanie, her sister Elizabeth, twelve or thirteen years her junior, strayed into the little room, and saw "sister Anne" at her escritoire.

"I have been writing a ballad, my dear," the frank elder sister told her little confidante; "and I am oppressing my heroine with many misfortunes. I have already sent her Jamie to sea, broken her father's arm, and made her

mother fall sick, and given her auld Robin for a lover, but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow in the four lines. Help me to one, I pray."

"Steal the cow, sister Anne," said the little Elizabeth.

The cow was immediately lifted, and the song completed.

"Auld Robin Gray" at once became popular at Balcarres and in the neighbourhood; but Lady Anne's authorship was only known to the immediate members of her family. In spite of her resolution to be silent on the question, she had sometimes difficulty in escaping detection. After singing "Auld Robin Gray" at Dalkeith, Lady Jane Scott, the Duke of Buccleuch's sister, said to her that she sang the song as if she had written it herself, and declared that if Lady Anne would not bribe her by a copy she would betray the secret. Lady Anne's ultimate explanation of her reticence was, that she dreaded to be known as a writer, because those who did not write would become shy of her. It was an innate feeling of Lady

Anne's that she had rather confer pleasure than inspire awe. When the outer world took up the song and made much of it, a reward of twenty guineas was offered for information as to its source, and the period to which it belonged; the Society of Antiquaries thinking the subject worth investigation. Lady Anne, more from hauteur and a spirit of merry mischief than from any other feeling, held curiosity at arm's length, and baffled all investigation. Her best reward was seeing a company of dancing dogs act the little drama below her windows.

Lady Margaret was to fare worse than her brothers—worse than any of them, although the young midshipman William was drowned off St. Helena in 177—, and Captain James was struck by grape-shot in storming the redoubts of Cuddalore, and died of his wound in a French hospital in 1783. Light compared with hers were the sufferings of Captain John, who was taken prisoner by Hyder Ali's forces in the battle of Conjeeveram in 1780, and lay in irons at Seringapatam, where he and his friend

Captain Baird may have lightened their terrible captivity, which lasted three years, by talk of home and half-forgetful laughter over the eccentricities of their old friend, David Baird's aunt, Miss Soph Johnstone. The ills of the brothers were those of the body rather than of the soul; and those even of Captain John were short compared with Lady Margaret's. Before she had attained her nineteenth year, her husband had ruined and disgraced himself. Her letters to him contain nothing but resignation and tenderness. By the time she was twenty-two, she had to pay a farewell visit to her beautiful bridal home in order to choose from that which had been hers what she was able to re-purchase. "I prayed for a little rain to sadden the glories of the prospect to a more suitable gloominess," she wrote to Lady Anne. But her prayer was not granted: the day was delightful; the place in perfect order; and every tree and shrub flourishing. She could only give a parting look, peep at the cartoons and the great room, and step into the carriage, carrying with her "a bunch of roses."

When Mr. Fordyce died within a few years, Lady Anne went up to London, and joined Lady Margaret (who was a childless widow) in Berkeley Square. Here the two sisters lived together between fifteen and twenty years. The great world of London was different from what was even then rapidly becoming the provincial world of Edinburgh. The Countess of Balcarres was wont to excuse herself jestingly for not dwelling with her daughters on the plea that she was nobody in England. But the sisters Lindsay were somebody in London. The beauty, modesty, and intellectual refinement of the young widow, Lady Margaret Fordyce, and the spirit and genius of Lady Anne Lindsay, were not such common qualities that they should have been lost in a crowd. In time, the little Lady Elizabeth of the sisters' early memories married happily the accomplished Earl of Hardwicke. The Honourable John Lindsay, in consolation for his sufferings, was to take from the congenially witty and lettered house of North a wife of whom Sir Walter Scott remarked that she never opened her mouth without reminding him



of the princess who could not comb her locks without scattering abroad pearls and rubies. This sister-in-law served, without any other bond of union, to bring Lady Anne and Lady Margaret *en rapport* with the Guildford set, including Horace Walpole, the Ailesburys, and the Berrys.

Burke and Wyndham, who had so petted "little Burney," were familiar friends of the sisters in Berkeley Square; and so were Sheridan and Dundas. The Prince Regent himself, whose inclinations tended in general less worthily, was capable of being a princely friend in this instance. He was especially attracted by "sister Anne," as he too chose to call her. On one occasion when he was ill he sent for her to cheer him, and to receive from him a gold chain as a token of his regard, because he might never see her again. The Lindsays, whose loyalty was a passion which no suffering could cool, valued to the utmost the Regent's good-will.

Lady Anne and Lady Margaret, with Lady Charlotte North and the Guildfords, must have made the pilgrimage, customary with pilgrims



in their rank, to Strawberry Hill, and been courteously treated by its old fine-lady master.

No doubt the book-loving sisters indulged in an early perusal of Cowper's "Task," and joined in the nine days' wonder at Darwin's "Botanic Garden." Very likely they had some acquaintance with Hannah More, who frequently visited London, making her head-quarters with Bishop Porteus, meeting Horace Walpole at Garrick's widow's, and writing her "Religion of the Fashionable World." Mrs. Carter, the translator of Epictetus, was likewise of the great world, and was in the way of ladies who did not dream of going out of their way to seek literary merit.

Breaking in upon their grief for the brothers they had lost, and their anxiety regarding that other brother whose fate remained for a time uncertain, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret would hear the declaration of the Independence of America, where some of the Lindsays had fought; and they would read of the killing of Captain Cook, and of the death of Charles Edward. As Londoners of the period, they

would have the full benefit of the Popish riots and of the trial of Warren Hastings. With the spice of malice that marked the rest of the quality in the matter, Ladies Anne and Margaret were sure to enter into the last enterprise of an Irish Gunning, when the niece of the famous beauties, after the great fortunes of the house were on the wane, ventured on the bold but unsuccessful stroke of maintaining, to the Marquis of Blandford's blank astonishment, that he had made her an offer of marriage. On account of Mrs. Piozzi's daughter, Queeny, who had become one of themselves, a Scotch earl's popular sisters might consent to grace the *fêtes* still given at Streatham, but which had sadly fallen off, like their rash mistress. If so, the visitors would learn from Mrs. Piozzi all that she had done in Mr. Thrale's lifetime for the Doctor, and how small the great man had shown himself to her in the end. The members of the Balcarres family must have witnessed with intelligent delight the playing of John Kemble and Liston, of Sarah Siddons, Miss Farren, and Mrs. Jordan.

By 1789 Lord Balcarres had married his cousin, Miss Dalrymple, who, through her mother, was heiress of Haigh Hall, in Lancashire; and while he was with his regiment, "young Lady Bal" was in Edinburgh for the education of her children. The Honourable Robert Lindsay had returned from India, and was celebrating his marriage with another cousin—pretty, domestic Miss Betsy Dick of Prestonfield. Before he had left Scotland, "he had marked her for his own" while she was yet a child. He had not only bought the estate of Leuchars, in Fife, but had settled annuities on his mother, Countess Anne, and on his sister, Lady Margaret. Countess Anne had removed to Edinburgh, and settled there with her cousin, dear friend, and protector, whom she thenceforth styled her "husband"—Mrs. Anne Murray Keith. Their house was in George Square, and opposite that of young Lady Bal, whose carriage and horses were at the command of the old ladies. They found themselves in the very centre of kindred and friends more numerous than often fall to the

lot even of men and women who have done well for themselves.

The Countess's house in George Square, to which Lady Anne came on visits, has been lovingly described by Mrs. Gillespie Smyth, daughter of Ambassador Keith. It had its snug parlour profusely adorned with family pictures. Books loaded the tables, the place of honour being assigned to the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. Next to them stood a well-bound, well-thumbed Shakespeare, volumes of English divines, and a copy of Dryden's Fables, "opening of itself at 'The Flower and the Leaf.'" Politics and history, in which the mistresses of the house had always regarded themselves as deeply concerned, had their oracles. French literature was represented by La Fontaine's Fables (great favourites of Earl James's), "a huge 'Télémaque,' with sprawling cuts," and of course a "De Sévigné." Supplying a hint of an equally voluminous correspondence, an unfinished letter was on a little writing-table, the files of papers belonging to which would have done honour to a

Secretary of State. A delicately enamelled gold snuff-box and a bag for knitting completed the picture.

The ladies saw a good deal of company, for Mrs. Murray Keith was fond of receptions and of patronage, and to both "husband" and "wife" their whist-table was indispensable.

In 1790, rendered anxious by a letter in which the Countess, their mother, referred to her increasing infirmities, Ladies Anne and Margaret came down on a six-weeks' visit to Scotland. Owing to some difficulty of accommodation, the sisters slept in the house of their sister-in-law, which was opposite to that of old Lady Bal, whom they were there to see. Lady Anne was comforted concerning her mother. The Countess was mellowed by age "as only strong wine mellows." Her anxieties for her family were set at rest. Her elder sons prospered. As for her soldier and sailor sons, they were bound to be content with winning the laurels which the spirited woman declared were, in her opinion, "very substantial food." Her son John was long ago released from his captivity.

His grievous privations, which, had his mother known of them earlier, must have cut her to the heart, were only the recollections of hardships which serve to point a soldier's tale, and make him welcome at every hospitable fireside. For William and James, who had died a sailor's and a soldier's death, they were but gone before, and, with their father, they would meet and welcome her in that haven to which her thoughts were more and more turning. Her temper had lulled and sweetened, if her memory was going from her. But while the past had to be recalled with difficulty, and by the help of others, the Countess could be brighter than she had ever been in the present. She was always more and more occupied with the future which the pages of her Bible promised her, "when we shall all be young together again, Annie," she said with pathetic yearning.

In compliment to her dear old mother, who frequently said, "Annie, I wish you would tell me how that unlucky business of Jeanie and Jamie ended," Lady Anne wrote her second part of "Auld Robin Gray." Though she



sang it to her mother, she did not give even the Countess a copy of the sequel to the song. But motherly affection triumphed over failing nature, and the memory which could retain little else, preserved the fresh verses from Lady Anne's singing. Old Lady Balcarres was in the habit of repeating the second part of "Auld Robin Gray," with the pride of being the only person, beside her daughter Anne, who had the power of doing so. To Lady Anne's own account of the writing of the second part of "Auld Robin Gray," Mrs. Pringle, of Whytbank, added the following particulars:— "About that time a ballad entitled, 'A Continuation of Auld Robin Gray,' was sung in the streets, and published in magazines and newspapers, which greatly annoyed the family, and was very trying to the sweet temper of Lady Anne. But it was not considered worthy of being disclaimed. In order to prove its spurious origin, Lady Anne retired to her room, and in a short time produced the fragment from which Sir Walter Scott copied a verse in the 'Pirate.' " Mrs. Pringle, then much in George



Square, picked up the fragment from hearing Lady Balcarres reciting it. Mrs. Pringle did not get it in confidence, but she considered it in the light of a trust, and only put it on paper for one of Lady Anne's own early friends—Mrs. Russel, born a Rutherfurd, of Hyndford Place. On Mrs. Russel's death it is supposed that the copy fell into the hands of her sister, Miss Christy Rutherfurd, and from her passed to Sir Walter Scott—"the little nephew" of George Square. Sir Walter's confession confirms the explanation. He had heard the first part of "Auld Robin Gray" sung by his aunt, Mrs. Russel, and given by her without hesitation as the song of her old friend, Lady Anne Lindsay. Many years afterwards he had got seven or eight verses of the second part from Mrs. Russel's sister, another and very dear aunt, Miss Christy Rutherfurd,—the great friend of Mrs. Murray Keith. All these persons were perfectly convinced of her ladyship's right to the whole ballad, and the ballad's right to her ladyship.

On this visit to Edinburgh, Lady Anne found

her old friend, Mistress Cockburn, still alive, and wonderfully unaltered by age, while Soph Johnstone was rapidly shrivelling into a wretched miser.

Returned to London, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret would hail with keen curiosity and pitiful questioning the arrival in London, and the presentation at court, of the Countess of Albany, the widow of Charles Edward, the last of those Stuarts to whom the Lindsays had been blindly faithful. The sisters, in common with the mass of aristocratic England, were doomed to watch in wonder, sorrow, and horror, the events happening over in France,—from the fate of the king's soldiers at Versailles to the guillotining of Marie Antoinette,—and hastened to throw open their doors and hearts to the flocks of refugees with historic names—Riche-lieu, De Biron, De la Tremouilles. The mature women must have criticised sharply the new fashions—the caps, casques, tight skirts, shawls fastened on one shoulder, and the classic sandals, which were worn instead of the hats and feathers, the gowns with square-cut bodies,

and bunchy trains pulled through the pocket-holes, the red mantles, and the shoes with high heels which were in vogue when the Lindsays were girls. Surely the well-brought-up daughters of high-principled little Lady Bal raised their eyebrows, shrugged their shoulders, and turned their backs on the dances which were being introduced by Emma, Lady Hamilton. Sisters Anne and Margaret would crave once more, with bated breath, news of lost Lord Howe and his fleet. Was not their young brother Hugh, the cadet of the large family, in one of Howe's ships?

About this period Lady Anne, after having waited till she was upwards of forty years of age, married Andrew Barnard, Esq., son of the Bishop of Limerick, a handsome, pleasantly-gifted man, without much wealth, and somewhat her junior. It is said that Mr. Barnard was far from the first or the most distinguished pretender to Lady Anne's hand, but that beneath her gay ease and readiness there lurked a certain fickle indecision, as well as a certain contentment with the present, which was fatal to the hopes of the lovers. It is expressly told that

she had kept her heart in her own possession till, in the afternoon of her life, she bestowed it on Mr. Barnard. That her choice in the end was to her perfect satisfaction every line which she wrote afterwards witnesses.

Misfortune continued to pursue Lady Margaret—"the most beautiful woman in Europe," as Lady Anne describes her. In Lady Margaret's prime, as in her promise, she wasted her affections. A second time she lavished them on a man "who sacrificed her life and happiness to his selfishness," not scrupling to extort the sacrifice while he refrained from fulfilling the obligation which would at least have given him a poor legal right to the womanly all of Lady Margaret's heart and fair prospects. Lady Anne had to part from her sister in these circumstances, to go with her husband to Ireland, where his father had the see of Limerick.

In 1797 Lady Anne accompanied Mr. Barnard to the Cape of Good Hope, whither he went as private secretary to Lord Macartney, when his lordship was appointed Governor of the new colony. The change from Berkeley Square

to what was then the primitive Dutch Cape was a very plunge from high cultivation, with its excitements and diversions, to rude simplicity and bald nature. It was a test to Lady Anne's principles and temper. But she liked the change, and her principles and temper stood the test. In the absence of any lady of Lord Macartney's family, she enjoyed being what she called "the woman" of the station, and a very fair *Governess* she proved herself.

Lady Anne was a high-born lady, fresh from princely and noble society. The residents of Cape Town, duly impressed, looked up to her, while they could not help being flattered by her presidency over their society. She had a lively perception of the gulf which existed between the colonists and herself, and did not hesitate to let it be seen—always in the best-bred way. She could both keep her own place, and keep other people in theirs. But she was too good-humoured to be entirely supercilious. She did indulge (in her journal) in all sorts of droll observations on the ladies, characterising them

as "mad in white muslin," with "no countenance, no manner, no graces;" but "with a vulgar smartness which told that the torch of Prometheus that animated them was made of mutton-tail." She conjectured that the dancing, "which was in a sort of pit-a-pat, tingling little step, and without halting a moment," had been learnt from some beauty on her way to Bengal; and she compared the unconscious self-satisfied dancers to such women as may be found in a country town "at an assize-ball a great way from the capital." She arrived at the characteristic conclusion that what these Dutch belles wanted most was "shoulders and softness of manners," and settled that she would thenceforth quite understand the term, "a Dutch doll."

But Lady Anne did more than take her fun out of the colonists. She really desired to recommend the English Government to the half-sullen conquered province. She had a feeling that it was her duty to keep the colonists in good-humour, and to improve, as far as possible, their tastes and habits by furnishing them with a fine example of English womanhood,



ladyhood, and sovereignty. No woman could have been quicker in resources, or less guiltless of supposing that she could demean herself by any act of condescension, usefulness, or innocent amusement, as means to an end.

The next thing to admire in Lady Anne during her exile was her immense power of accepting a situation. Beyond praise are the zest and relish with which, after her confessed hearty appreciation of "the politest society," she turned to a traveller's compensations, and became again a child of nature as she had been in the farm-yard and the Den of Balcarres. She found treasures everywhere. The ignorance of her simple, buoyant intelligence was rather in her favour. She was neither bored nor bowed down by weighty authorities and scientific laws, and she did not harass herself with mental cramming before or after her excursions. To be told everything as she went along was her comfortable plan of gaining knowledge, of which her memory enabled her to appropriate and digest a surprising amount. Thus stories of families of rabbits every member

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blind of one eye, *king* bees whose sting was certain death, stones full of all colours of paint-powder, rose-trees blowing exactly at four o'clock each afternoon, were received with the utmost satisfaction, and swallowed almost without a struggle.

At the Castle, Lady Anne gave balls on the first day of every month, and tea and music every Thursday. She took the subaltern officers under her peculiar protection. At stated times she and Mr. Barnard entertained Lord Macartney, the aides-de-camp, or the town magnates to dinner; the burden of stimulating and supplementing the genius of Revel, the Swiss cook, falling upon Lady Anne. With a suspicion of her coming difficulties, she had carried with her from England "a map" of a quartered and subdivided ox and sheep for the instruction of the Dutch butchers. She insisted on an ample provision of light at her parties, using up for that purpose, on one occasion, the same wax-candles which had shone on the *élite* of London society, with a sprinkling of royal dukes, in Berkeley Square. Generally speaking, Lady

Anne managed all the etiquette, hospitality, and housekeeping of the Castle, and was a very busy and important woman.

She gave herself up to old and novel country pleasures when she and Mr. Barnard retired to their country-house of Paradise—a Dutch farm-house on the side of a mountain three thousand feet high, with rows of orange-trees in flower and fruit shading the windows. She fed her cats and chickens, she drew, she gardened.

Both at the Castle and in Paradise, Lady Anne luxuriated in pets. She had a little tame buck that would fain have slept upon her feet. A couple of secretary-birds ("namesakes of Barnard's"), with long legs, black velvet breeches, and large wings, never ate standing, but sat down to dinner as regularly as did their master and mistress. A sea-calf was coaxed into living by having a teapot with milk thrust into his mouth every time he opened it to bleat. A penguin, resembling the old ladies who wore sacques with long ruffles, spent half its time in the pond with the calf, and half in the drawing-

room with Lady Anne. Two jackals were the delight of the dogs, from their coquettishness; and two young wild cats were nursed by a dog. A horned owl was an emblem of wisdom, and a beautiful green chameleon, of folly.

Lady Anne was constantly over head and ears collecting specimens of Cape plants and animals—great rarities in those days—to take home with her or to send to her friends in England. She had the Lindsay affectionateness which kept her heart warm in absence, and enabled her to retain the kindly generosity of “sister Anne” of Balcarres. She was prone to serve others before herself, in true elder-sister fashion. Withal, it does sometimes strike us as if these acquisitions, and the enriching of her friends, formed a little too much the business of Lady Anne’s life. From procuring a tiger-skin for the Prince Regent, and castor-oil seeds to mix with gold and other beads for the Queen and the Princesses, to endowing less exalted personages, she is never at rest in making her gains. Though she writes in good faith of her reluctance to ask for any curiosity which had

taken her fancy, and blames herself for false delicacy and shyness, one does not remark the presence of these qualities ; and in spite of the barter of good things which she effected, and the invitations to the Castle which she freely dispensed to all who conferred favours on her, here and there her progress reads like a spoiling of the Egyptians. A doubt is left on the mind whether Lady Anne did not share in the royal and aristocratic delusion, that not only was service to her its own reward, but that no claim which she could proffer could be an exaction if it was proffered for the sake of her friends. In spite of this she was a humane, enlightened woman, an agreeable secretary's wife, and deserved most of the simple enough spoil which she did not scruple to take.

As Lady Anne had asked for the bit of oat-cake from the butler at Balcarres from love of variety, so she enjoyed every homely incident of her life among the Dutch boors. It is enjoyable still to read the wonderfully lifelike extracts published from her journal. It is hardly possible not to exalt "the blood and the breed-

ing," with their unflagging spirit. Her ascent of Table Mountain and her sleeping on it was a brilliant episode. Before starting, she had been guilty of a piece of waggery. "I had stolen a part of Barnard's wardrobe for precaution, which made him, as I bounded up the rocks, laugh, and call out, 'Heyday, Anne! what are these?' 'Yours, *meyne lieve vrcunde*,' said I; 'you must acknowledge it is the first time you were ever conscious of my wearing them.'" The slave-guide smiled, and called her a "*braave vrow*,"—as Lady Anne translates it, "a rare wife,"—and she was very proud of the compliment. She left all the gentlemen behind her, "envying the *braave vrow*; her light heels being the effect, perhaps, of the lightness of her heart." She reached the top first. To find herself three thousand five hundred feet high, to behold a considerable town more invisible than the smallest miniature, and to feel the pure air invigorating her, "gave her a disembodied feeling." "And now," she said to her most learned companion, Mr. Barrow, with her habit of commanding, which was nevertheless a very

bright habit in her, "thou man of infinite charts and maps, explain to me all that I see before me, and what I do not see. What is this? What is that? What are the different bays I hear you all wrangling about? And do not suppose that I am to clamber to the top of Table Mountain for nothing." Before giving each gentleman his bumper of Madeira to invigorate him for the descent, she made the request that all the party might unite in the full chorus of "God save the King," a request which was instantly complied with, "every hill—the Lion's Head, Lion's Rump, Devil's Hill, Hottentot Mountain—singing his part, as they (the company) had done before, till 'Great George' grew less at every turn, and at last gave up the ghost like a private gentleman in a valley." The lady and her squires had snipes for supper (on which she has the note: "N.B.—I believe we ate a dozen apiece at least"), the slaves lay round the fire, and "Barnard and I," so she wound up her narrative, "within our tent found a good bed, on which two heads reposed themselves that were truly grateful for



all the blessings conferred on them, but most so for their happiness in each other."

A cluster of wandering stars rose on Lady Anne's horizon, in the shape of Lord Mornington, with his brother and suite, on his way to fill the Governor-generalship of India. These travellers brought with them a delightful waft of old associations, news from city and court. They were especially welcome to the "Governess" of the Cape of Good Hope. She had a natural sympathy with Governors-general, through her brother Balcarres, who was trying the office as Governor of Jersey before filling it on a greater scale as Governor of Jamaica, and several more of her brothers had been or were in India—where were not Lady Anne's brothers? But it was not to his Excellency that her ladyship awarded her hospitality first. She wrote, with true nobility of heart, that she and her husband would have been happy to accommodate people that they loved so much (a Governor-general, to boot), "had not the prior claims of the A——s as older friends, nearer friends, and *poorer friends*, made it impossible to sacrifice the holy



motive to the agreeable attraction." Only the successful invasion of his enemies the bugs into his quarters brought the Governor-general as a humble petitioner for what the Barnards had not the heart to deny him—one of their back parlours.

The Barnards' tour into the interior, undertaken in the year of the Irish Rebellion, is an excellent specimen throughout of genteel comedy. The company, in addition to Lady Anne and Mr. Barnard, with their servants, included a young lady, the beauty of the colony, who was visiting Lady Anne, and Lady Anne's cousin Johnny, one of the innumerable Dalrymples—a cavalier of seventeen, who had been judiciously appointed aide-de-camp to the beauty on the journey. The beauty, it should be told, took every inconvenience *en route* as a personal injury.

The conveyance, sometimes drawn by horses, sometimes by bullocks, was a waggon, supplied with a wooden case to pack the travellers into. Each furnished his or her stock of necessaries. Mr. Barnard took the lead with the heavier

*pièces de résistance*—hams, Hamburg beef, liqueurs, powder. The careful *haus-vrouw* Anne Barnard followed. Besides “a conjuror” for cooking stews, pine-apple cheeses, a jar of Batavian ginger, tea, coffee, sugar, rice, and what her mother the Scotch countess would have called “the napery” of the expedition, she lugged with her a great assortment of coarse handkerchiefs, ribbons, beads, common knives, needles and thread, to dispense among the subjects of the Government. The beauty carried a selection from her wardrobe, and a knitting-case containing some pins, pen and ink, and a half-finished purse, dividing the care of the knitting-case between herself and her aide-de-camp.

For the convenience of shooting without loss of time any game which might start up, five loaded guns were slung in the waggon, and the only stipulation open to Lady Anne and the beauty was to have the guns placed where the ladies had the *least* chance of being shot.

On the front seat sat “the illustrious Gasper”

the driver, and behind him Lady Anne, on her knee the family drawing-book of the Barnards, which had descended from mitre to mitre, and found itself very much astonished at its present situation. By her sat the secretarius Barnard, for the express purpose of popping out at the partridges on half a minute's notice. Behind them again were Cousin Johnny and the beauty, seated on the woolsacks, viz., mattresses, "a situation she said she preferred to the front seat, where she could have *only* seen the country. Johnny highly approved of her preferring this seat, as the country was not fit to be looked at." The common costume of the explorers—ladies and gentlemen alike—was great-coats.

Thus the cavalcade jogged across the sandy plains and skirted the table-lands in search of adventures. They rested every night at Dutch farm-houses, and partook, in so far as it was possible, of Dutch boors' fare—bock, fowls, pheasants, mutton-tail—paying or not paying for their entertainment as their compulsory hosts received or refused remuneration. Lady Anne found every prosperous farmer's

wife fatter than another, and with bigger monsters of children. So scornfully pitiful were these *boresses* of the Governess's childless state, that she got Mr. Barnard to consent to having four fictitious boys left in England. She would not have girls, lest people should say she neglected them; but she would leave four boys across the sea engaged in their education. Once, finding a childless matron like herself, she considerably suppressed her supposititious progeny, that she might not overwhelm her sister in misfortune.

The gentlemen found sport among the bocks and the pheasants. Johnny shot a pow, or wild peacock, which Lady Anne plucked for him, and they had it roasted and ate it as a great delicacy. Ladies and gentlemen visited a cave with petrifications, where lions were *smelt* by the horses.

There was an overturn, out of which the beauty came "preserved, in the sweetest sense of the word, as the cask of ginger had had its top knocked off in the fall, and had poured its contents in at her neck and out at her toe, by

which means she was a complete confection." On occasions the party dined off the top of a cask, and lay down to sleep like a company of strolling players. In an extreme case of a sluttish *ménage* the beauty wanted a clean cup, and the hostess presented her with a child's soiled nightcap to wipe the cup, out of which Mr. Prince (a clerk and auctioneer who attended on the secretary in the character of a courier) had just drunk. Unconquerable Lady Anne was so provoking as to hope this would have made the beauty laugh, but the poor beaten beauty was more ready to cry.

The travellers visited the Moravian missionaries, or Herrnhutters, and Lady Anne made them a gift of seeds. As the most gracious mark of her esteem, she presented them also with the flesh strawberry which had been sent to her by her sister Lady Margaret, "the most beautiful woman in Europe," believing that they were duly impressed by the last piece of information. Lady Anne was for ever drawing mountains and Hottentots. Everywhere she laid herself out to amass calabashes, serpents' skins,

and Job's tears. Everywhere she lavished handkerchiefs, ribbons, and beads on the slaves as well as on their mistresses, on the Hottentots as well as on the Dutch, with now and then a bit of womanly thoughtfulness and partiality. Each boor was, will he nill he, hospitable; and as most of them declined payment in money, a large proportion of their fat wives got invitations to return Lady Anne's visit when they were down in Cape Town—an honour which she was surprised to see them take phlegmatically.

Mr. Barnard bought up a farm's whole stock of dried peaches, for which he had a liking; and he cured a boor of threatened gout in the stomach by administering timely glasses of Madeira. Lady Anne ordered a cargo of cured fish for winter use at the Castle, and longed to cut the tacked tongue of a dumb child, but did not dare to attempt it.

The family of the Van Rheimes stood out as quality among the boors. Van Rheime was a Cape Town man, disgusted with town life; his *vroon* was gentle and cleanly. His farm, with its underwood of aloes, was famous for its sport.



A hunting waggon, drawn by eight horses, in which Lady Anne and the beauty, not to be behind the gentlemen, accompanied their friends, galloped over the rough tracks within sight and aim of ostriches, pows, and bocks, while the crack and patter of the shooting went on without ceasing, on every side. There was fishing also to be had on the farm, and the Barnards' party, with the whole Van Rheime family, drove to the Breech Rivière, and saw the nets drawn. The produce was "a huge skate as large as a house, which sighed bitterly, and died with difficulty, and was ordered into oil." Over and above it were *bécasse* fish, similar to eels, but with bills like woodcocks. During another day's sport zebras were hailed at a distance.

The Barnards made their longest sojourn with the Van Rheimes. A regular friendship sprang up between the hosts and their guests. Mr. Barnard gave to Jacob Rheime a gun which the secretary had valued. Lady Anne gave to the *wrow* a little of everything that remained in her boxes, and, as a particular token of regard, she left her smelling-bottle, with its



double gold top. The heads and waists of the children were tied up by Lady Anne's own hands with scarlet and white ribbons. Every slave was made happy with a handkerchief, and scissors, thread, and needles, a knife, and two schellings. Lady Anne records as a worthy tribute to the memory of the Van Rheimes, "Had I a fortnight at my command to spend pleasantly, where I should be sure to be welcome, I should not make a scruple of going to Jacob Van Rheime's, to partake of his fish from his pond—the ocean, and of his bock from his park of two hundred miles in circumference."

Lady Anne's journal reads very like an earlier, rude cabinet version of Miss Eden's "Up the Country." The Barnards' plan had been to return from the Cape of Good Hope by a circuitous route, including New South Wales, Egypt, and Greece. To their regret, however, the Peace of Amiens, in 1802, gave the colony back to the Dutch. While Mr. Barnard was obliged to remain at the Cape for a year to settle colonial business, Lady Anne proceeded to England with the fleet. Her purpose was to

endeavour to procure a situation under Government for her husband on his return ; but her talents as well as her influence, in this respect, failed.

In England she found that women's hair had crept down to their eyebrows, and their waists up to their chins. Her friend the Prince Regent was not only married, as all his good subjects had wished him to be, to his cousin of Brunswick, but had come to grief in his character of husband. Lady Anne's connections, the Norths, were much mixed up with the impulsive, unruly, injured Princess of Wales. Lady Charlotte Lindsay, the Honourable John's wife, was one of the Princess's favourite ladies-in-waiting—altogether an awkward complication of relations for a friend of the Prince Regent's.

Miss Jeanie Rutherford's wonderful little nephew had brought out the "Minstrelsy of the Border"—a work after Lady Anne's heart. He was just about to publish "Marmion." Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth were writing their novels of real life ; Mrs. Radcliffe her romances ; and Elizabeth Hamilton her

popular tale of the "Cottagers of Glenburnie;" while Joanna Baillie was putting on the stage (the worst place where they could have been put) her "Plays of the Passions." Mary Berry had become the intimate friend of Elizabeth, Countess of Hardwicke, by the instrumentality of Joanna's brother, Dr. Baillie, and, through Mary Berry, Lady Anne ought to have known Joanna Baillie. But Joanna was no fine lady, nor was she a woman of fashion. Distinguished woman of letters as she was, she led a simple retired life with her mother and sister at Hampstead, while Lady Anne did not quit her own sphere, not even to meet Sir Walter when, in the zenith of his fame, he went up, once and again, to London, to be *fêted* and lionised.

Lady Anne travelled down to Scotland in 1803—4 to see her mother. The Countess and her "husband," Mrs. Keith, had returned to end their days at Balcarres. Earl Alexander, though he had found an honourable escape from his main difficulties by his governorships, had been forced to give up Balcarres, and retain his wife's estate of Haigh Hall. However, the *château*

and its farms were not doomed to pass from the Lindsays. The Honourable Robert redeemed them, reserving to his brother the right of repurchase, which Earl Alexander did not choose to exercise. It was with Robert Lindsay and his wife and family that the two attached old ladies had taken up their residence. Lady Anne, after her exile, enjoyed revisiting "the dear old nest," where, as she said, "eleven brother and sister chickens had been hatched and fostered, who through life had never known once what it was to peck at each other." It is very likely that on this and on future visits Lady Anne was lodged in the room termed "Cromwell's room," from its repute of having been slept in by the Protector: it was on the same stair, but lower down than her less dignified perch of earlier days.

Before Lady Anne saw Balcarres again, a cloud of misfortune had darkened over her, such as that which the Lindsays had encountered in 1780—4, when Captain James was killed, and Captain John was in the hands of Hyder Ali. She had returned to England in time for the

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great sight of Nelson's funeral, and for the public lamentation over the death of William Pitt; but private losses were about to sweep all others out of her mind. In 1808 she sustained a heavy blow in the death of her husband, after a true union of fourteen or fifteen years.

Mr. Barnard had requested in his will that Lady Anne would send testimonies of his regard to those friends whom she knew he honoured and esteemed. She had engravings taken from his picture, and sent one to the Prince Regent. His Royal Highness, whose own matrimonial experience had been disastrous, was sufficiently moved to write a note expressive of his gratitude, condolence, and, above all, remembrance of old times.

In the same year Lady Anne's nephew, the Earl of Hardwicke's eldest son and heir, Lord Royston, perished by the wreck of his yacht during a storm in the Baltic. He was a fine young man of twenty-four, with all the Lindsays' love of letters, and he was so ardent a traveller that he had been absent from England since before the attainment of his majority.

In June of the following year Miss Berry mentions being at an assembly at Lady Margaret Fordyce's, where were present the Princess of Wales, with her lady-in-waiting, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, and Lady Charlotte's sister, Lady Glenburnie. There is no mention of Lady Anne Barnard as having been there. Possibly she did not go out in those days, or she stood out against identifying herself with the Princess, continuing reluctant to believe that the "finest gentleman" was the worst husband in Europe. Later in the same year, 1809, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret once more went together to Scotland and Balcarres. This seems to have been Lady Margaret's (if not Lady Anne's) last return home. Lady Anne describes the time as saddened by the sense that the heart which would have rejoiced with theirs was still, and by the inevitable contrast between this and former sojourns. The sisters found their mother without a complaint, though she was now eighty-two. She was oppressed only by the want of memory, "which being known and acknowledged, gave her no concern." The



old Countess was handed down to dinner every day by her youngest grandson, aged five years. There were only seventy-seven years between the cavalier and his lady, "who did not feel quite happy unless she had a few compliments paid to her on her dress and good looks."

Lady Anne and Lady Margaret remained over the great family festival, that was at once their mother's birthday and Christmas Day. Each member of the family presented the venerable heroine of the occasion with his or her *cadeau*, and Lady Anne put hers, a black lace cloak, over "the nice little figure," and wished her mother many happy returns of the day. "She seemed proud and pleased—her eyes sparkled with unusual intelligence. 'Is not this too fine for me?' she said; 'but I accept it with pleasure, and in return, Annie, I will make you a present which I hope you will live to enjoy the benefit of. I mean the knowledge that old age is not the miserable state that people suppose it to be; on the contrary, it is one of calm enjoyment. . . . The thoughts



of that untried country, Annie, to which I am invited by my Saviour, are to me the source of inexhaustible delight. I trust,' said she with fervour, 'that I shall there meet with you all again, through His merits, in perpetual youth and endless happiness. And this castle of mine, Annie, is not a *château d'Espagne*, as Madame Annie Keith calls some of my projects when she does not approve of them.'"

In 1810 Lady Anne still had her house at Wimbledon. The poor Hardwicks removed to it to be out of the way of receiving people, after Dr. Baillie had gone down to Wimpole Hall only to see the last of "little Charlie," their second and sole surviving son.

Shortly afterwards Lady Anne must have taken up house again with Lady Margaret in their old quarters of Berkeley Square. But "changes were the order of the day," and this reunion was to be of brief duration. Lady Margaret's disloyal and cruel lover had goaded, by slow torture, a spirit meek as that of a saint, so that she turned upon him at last.

While "his conduct latterly inspired her with

the disdain it merited," a deep resentment utterly foreign to Lady Margaret's character corroded her heart. Lady Anne witnessed the work with indignation and pain. She declared that it was only "at the earnest instance of affection," and "upon a solemn occasion of religious duty," that she prevailed on her sister to abjure for ever a sentiment contrary to the spirit of Christian forgiveness of injuries. "She did so when taking the sacrament in Dublin" (it might be from the hand of the gentle Charles Lindsay, the likeliest to Lady Margaret of any member of the family), and peace was restored to her mind. But it was too late for youth, beauty, and health, which had all fled.

Yet the clinging heart could not continue to beat without a new stay round which it might wind its tendrils. At an advanced period of life Lady Margaret became the third wife of a worthy and cultivated gentleman, "who, as he then acknowledged, had been attached to her almost from infancy," notwithstanding that he had twice married in the interval. This Jacob was Sir James Bland Burgess, an old

pupil of Dr. Somerville's. Sir James was member for Helstone, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Knight-Marshal of the Household. He was literary, like the rest of these literary people, with whom the malady seemed not merely hereditary, but infectious. He was the author of "The Birth and Triumph of Love," and "Richard I.," an epic poem, scarcely so well known as the household song of "Auld Robin Gray." He had married first Elizabeth Noel, daughter of Viscount Wentworth; then Anne, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Montolieu; and at last he married his first love, Lady Margaret Fordyce.

Lady Margaret's marriage took place in the year 1812—the great year when London was again and again illuminated for Lord Wellington's Peninsular victories. Lady Anne must have recalled how Lord Mornington, when she was his hostess and "Governess" of the Cape of Good Hope, had talked to her, and afterwards written to her, of his brother Arthur's exploits in India. This was the season, too, when Lady Hardwicke gave her famous pri-

vate theatricals, her friends being tormented by hundreds of hopeless applications for tickets. When the audience was graced by the presence of the Prince Regent and two royal dukes, not to speak of the two banished French Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, what green-room could have been better fitted with an ally and assistant, if Lady Anne, as she surely did, looked in behind the scenes?

Lady Margaret Burgess was comforted by the consideration and kindness of her second husband, and by the regard of his children, to whom she proved a mild stepmother. She was happier than her friends had ever known her; but she was worn out and weary in the midst of her happiness, and she died, in devout readiness to obey her Master's call for her to depart, within two years of her marriage.

Lady Margaret's last illness and death occurred in the most brilliant year of the decade, '14. On the arrival in England of the allied princes, Mary Berry, in her journal, makes constant reference to her association with Lady Hardwicke and Lady Charlotte Lindsay; but

the name of Lady Anne Barnard—not the least distinguished of the four—never once occurs, an absence which may be accounted for by the circumstance of what was to Lady Anne a special bereavement.

Though Lady Anne was far from withdrawing from the society of her kindred and friends during the next ten years, she seems to have lived less in the world after the deaths of her husband and sister. What she said with regard to her contribution to the family memoirs, she might have said of the late autumn of her life, which had boasted its own time of picturesque incident and interest: “Having for the present closed all that it is necessary to say of kings and courts, I return to the haunts of my heart, like the traveller who has been long away, gleaning from other countries what may amuse the dear circle at home, grieving with tenderness over chasms in that circle—never to be filled up; but grateful for what remains of friendship and affection still on earth to cheer the evening of life.”

Lady Anne added, on her own account, “Of

Elizabeth's (Lady Hardwicke's) society I have all that I can in reason expect from the avocations which, as a mother and a grandmother to four families, multiply themselves upon her every day. My brothers rally round me with kindness when business calls them to town; but it is in the affection of my two nephews (Lord Lindsay and my young guardsman, James, son of Robert Lindsay) I find the tenderness so unusual in young men, which is ever ready to fly to be my prop and support when I feel a want of it. No ostentation is to be found in their attentions. They do not tease me with solitudes about my health, with giving me chairs when I do not wish to sit down, or asking me to drink wine, or to be helped to what at home I may venture to ask for. All is liberty and equality here, untaxed by restraint; it is granted by them to me, and by me to them; even their wives permit me to steal into my own den (my drawing-room, of forty feet long, surrounded with papers and drawings), and employ myself all the morning without thinking themselves ill-used by my absence. . . . My friends press me to go out



to amuse myself; but I should go without any interest beyond the charm of getting home again. By the side of my fire I have got into the habit of living in other days with those I loved, reflecting on the past, hoping in the future, and sometimes looking back with a sorrowful retrospect where I fear I may have erred. Together with those mental employments I have various sources of improvement. I compile and arrange my memorandums of past observations and events; I retouch some sketches, and form new ones from souvenirs taken on the spot. Sometimes I employ an artist to finish these, but all is first traced accurately with my own pencil, so impossible do I find it to get any one to enter exactly into the spirit of my subject. With such entertainment for my mornings, and a house full of nephews and nieces, together with the near connections of my dear Barnard, all tenderly attached to me, I have great, great reason to bless God, who, in taking much from me, has left me so much."

One of these nephews, when asked by a younger member of his house to give some



account of Lady Anne as she was at this time, declared that it would be no easy matter to draw the portrait of one whose charms and weaknesses were so intermingled. He dwelt on her benevolence and her power of giving and receiving pleasure. He had often seen her change a disagreeable party into an agreeable one ; she could make the dullest speak, the shyest feel happy, and the witty flash fire, without any apparent exertion. He loved her as a mother, and so did all who dwelt under her roof. He gave a characteristic anecdote of her. "She was entertaining a large party of distinguished guests at dinner, when a hitch occurred in the kitchen. The old servant came up behind her, and whispered, 'My lady, you must tell another story; the second course won't be ready for five minutes.'" Is there not an anecdote almost the same told of Madame Maintenon?

Of the sprightliness which won for the Lindsays the distinctive term "light Lindsays,"—the lightness, contrary to a common acceptance of the word, being often rooted in honest, unquestioning piety,—Lady Anne had her full

share. It continued with her almost unabated, as did the pleasant self-satisfaction of her easy autocratical tone, her frank and genial affability. We rarely have such unstinted, unbroken sprightliness in women now.

We may no longer hope to meet with such genuine gaiety of heart as electrified the listless aides-de-camp and subalterns, and even, by help of an interpreter, delighted the stolid Dutch boors and their fat wives, when Lady Anne was Governess of the Cape, the indomitable spirit within her finding ample fund for quips and flights when she was a widow well up in years. Our self-satisfaction has been rudely shaken; the most autocratical of us has been lifted bodily from her pedestal. As a rule a higher goal of good causes men and women more frequently to fall in the race, and to halt painfully after the falling. "Deeper and more elevated feelings, where they exist to any appreciable extent, must cast at least some shadow over the soul that possesses them." That shadow, intensifying and softening human

nature, will, on the other hand, take from its limpid, shallow brightness.

But while we would not recall the lower standard, the surface sparkle of good-humour which prevailed among our grandmothers, and while we are willing to pay the full penalty for something better, we are fain to look back wistfully on that constant blitheness which we have in a measure lost, and to acknowledge heartily all that was true and sweet in its origin.

Countess Anne still survived at Balcarres in great old age, "happy with her knotting," and "entranced with her Bible and the lives of the patriarchs."

In 1815 the battle of Waterloo shook, like a thunder-peal, the quiet homes of age, especially homes like that of the Lindsays, where the nephews and grandsons of a noble race of soldiers had in course of years taken their fathers' places in the field. At Tunbridge, Lady Hardwicke was one of the four ladies who held each a plate at church after a sermon in aid of a collection for the wounded at Waterloo.

In literature, Walter Scott and Byron had taken the place of Cowper and Darwin. Edmund Kean and Miss O'Neill were playing on the London boards, in the room of Elliston, John Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons.

In 1816 Lady Anne for a time lost the society of her sister Hardwicke by the marriage of her daughter, Lady Elizabeth Yorke, to Sir Charles Stuart, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothesay, English Ambassador in Paris. Lord and Lady Hardwicke and Miss Berry accompanied the couple to Paris, which had become a kind of *terra incognita* to the English since the old days of Horace Walpole's friendship with Madame Dudevant. The party inspected the scenes — having still a horrible freshness to strangers—of the French Revolution, attended the court of the restored Bourbons, and visited the remnant of the old noblesse in the Faubourg St. Germain. Lady Anne could watch their progress from her arm-chair, and hear their adventures, altogether different from those of her waggon tour in Africa, with sympathy as entire as that which she had given to

the domestic joys and sorrows of the "little Elizabeth" of Balcarres, whom Lady Anne lived to see the mother of the four peeresses of Mexborough, Caledon, Somers, and Stuart de Rothesay.

Lady Anne was kept informed of the old Countess's secure and perfect contentment, and did not fail on her part in affectionate and dutiful attention. But no trace occurs of Lady Anne's having gone down again to visit her mother at Balcarres. In 1816 Countess Anne entered her ninetieth year, and a letter was written to Lady Anne giving all the little family details of the long celebrated birthday. How the Countess's health was drunk by a numerous party, and the door was left open between the dining-room and bedroom, that she might hear the cheers with which it was received. In return, she drank a bumper to the health of her descendants, old friends, and neighbours, and sent back to them a feeble cheer. In the drawing-room her own gift of a hundred-guinea vase to her daughter-in-law was displayed, to the Countess's great satisfaction. And in the very hour of enjoyment Lady Anne's

remembrance of the day had presented itself, and her mother insisted on having the two pretty boxes her daughter Anne had sent her in her own keeping.

In 1817 Lady Hardwicke was able to be down in Scotland, and to bring back to Lady Anne a personal report of their mother.

In 1818 a tie dating three-quarters of a century back was dissolved by the death at Balcarres of Mrs. Anne Murray Keith; but the Countess was far beyond human grief. In forgetting everything she never quite forgot this loss, very temporary as she felt it; yet she only remembered it to have much pleasure in hearing the circumstances of her friend's last moments repeated to her, calling the narrative "a bonnie story, and very edifying," and forbidding her attendants to regret Mrs. Keith's death any more than Lady Margaret's, or that of any other true Christian "who escaped easily and beautifully from the world."

In 1820 Lady Anne wrote to the Countess a touching letter from a daughter of seventy to a mother of ninety-three.

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“MY DEAREST MOTHER,

“I received your sweet message by James Lindsay, desiring me to pray for you sometimes. Sure I am that I ought to ask you to do the same for me, as I have little doubt of your possessing a better interest in the heavenly mansions than your poor Annie, whose views, alas! are not yet so much detached from this world as yours are; but I hope they will follow your example, and that we shall meet again as blessed spirits after we are purified from the foibles that flesh is heir to. Meantime you must on your part do something for me. Allow the painter I send you from Edinburgh, who is an intelligent man, to take your picture exactly as you are. You will be more valuable to us sitting cheerfully, composedly, and apparently far advanced in life as we all hope to be, in your chair, than if he was to make a young Venus of you. God bless my dear mother, and give her as many healthy and happy years as she can desire to enjoy before ‘the renovation of youth and nature’ arrives, which old Lord Mansfield told



me, not long before his death, he was then expecting with patient hope.

“Ever and ever,

“Your affectionate and dutiful daughter,

“ANNE BARNARD.”

The painter went and executed his commission, and the ancient lady, done with the business of life, was “infinitely pleased and gratified,” instead of plagued by the ordeal.

In answer to this letter of Lady Anne’s, her mother sent her the message, “Tell Annie that

‘My wheel I turn round, but I come little speed,

For my hand is grown feeble, and weak is my thread ;’ ”

quoting from the second part of “Auld Robin Gray,” of which the Countess had been chosen to be the sole keeper, and all the verses of which she could repeat almost to her last day. She could still find occupation in her work and delight in her Bible. In summer she enjoyed her garden-chair, which took her sometimes as far as the turnip-fields which Earl James had been so eager about a long lifetime before. She was treated with such tender delicacy by her

good son and his wife that she came to believe Balcarres was her own again, and the two, with their family, were her guests ; so that it was a pretty and a proper piece of respect which they paid to their hostess and the lady of the house, as well as their mother, that they should come and sit with her for half an hour and read her a chapter or a hymn every evening before she retired to rest.

But the flame of life was very low in the socket, and in the year 1820, Countess Anne, then in her ninety-fourth year, died an almost painless death, and was laid to rest with the chivalrous old husband of her youth, and with the cousin and friend whom she had named in merry mockery the husband of her age,—Mrs. Murray Keith having bequeathed her body as a fitting legacy to the ivied chapel of Balcarres.

Lady Anne survived her mother nearly five years. In the same year with Countess Anne died her “old flirt”—as she used to call him, alluding to his courteous attentions to her—King George III. ; and with the hasty return to England of the Princess of Wales in order

to procure her coronation, followed the impeachment and trial of Queen Caroline. Lord Hardwicke was on the committee in the Lords. Lady Charlotte Lindsay having been for a period of years a lady-in-waiting, and a favourite with the Queen, underwent a searching and lengthened public examination. Lady Charlotte's honest, impartial evidence, which in the main was in the Queen's favour, received deserved praise; but when they questioned her on family misfortunes, and referred to the deaths of her brother Francis and her sister Lady Glenburnie, which had happened within a few weeks of each other, she burst into tears. Dr. Lushington, one of Queen Caroline's counsel, in commenting upon Lady Charlotte's evidence, by implication brought a charge against her husband which not only made Lady Charlotte feel deeply aggrieved, but must have caused a pang of indignant pain to Lady Anne, and to every member of the united and loyal Lindsays. Dr. Lushington suggested broadly that Colonel the Honourable John Lindsay, living in a little island near Guernsey, apart from his

wife, on account of the state of his affairs, had sold to the Government party the letters which his wife had written to him on his being proposed for the office of chamberlain in the Princess of Wales's household. Far better that John Lindsay should have died a soldier's honourable death with his brother James, or that he should have perished in his captivity at Seringapatam, than that such an accusation had been established.

But Lord Balcarres, in his remonstrance in the House of Lords against the insulting inference which would have fatally compromised his brother, reminded Dr. Lushington conclusively that the letters which the Honourable John Lindsay was supposed to have sold, were those of the very woman whose personal influence over him prevented his accepting the office of chamberlain. Dr. Lushington withdrew his half statement with a sufficient apology.

It does not appear that he had any authority whatever for his suggestion, beyond the thoughtlessness and rashness which John Lindsay, in the following explanation, ad-

mitted: "About four years before this trial, the Princess of Wales had been anxious to appoint him her chamberlain, with a salary of four hundred pounds per annum, upon condition that he and Lady Charlotte should reside with her in the palace of Rastadt, where she at that time intended to live. Lady Charlotte then explained to her husband the reasons why she did not wish the proposal to be accepted. Colonel Bayley was at 'this time the Governor of Guernsey; Colonel Lindsay lived alone, and was frequently visited by Colonel Bayley. The consequence of this intimacy was that Colonel Lindsay very imprudently confided to him all that had passed between him and his wife on the subject of this appointment, and occasionally read him passages from her letters. Colonel Bayley was a confidential friend at Carlton House, and these communications were passed on and received there with avidity. Colonel Lindsay had no idea he was communicating with an agent of the King's, until an offer was made to him of any number of soldiers that he might require to work his stone quarries,

and of various other conveniences of which he was in need, upon condition that he should give up the letters. This he refused to do, and it opened his eyes at once to the imprudence he had committed."

In 1821, died Napoleon Bonaparte, who had been the scourge and terror of Europe for the better part of Lady Anne's life, on that little islet rock off which her young brother William had been drowned.

Only the year before her death Lady Anne was confessing the spells of the Wizard of the North, although oddly enough she had failed to recognise either in Mr. Scott the poet, or in the Author of "Waverley," the little lame prodigy of her early friend and his aunt, Miss Jeanie Rutherford.

When reading the "Pirate," Lady Anne came upon a verse from the second part of her "Auld Robin Gray." High praise was awarded to the ballad, and it was assigned to Lady Anne Barnard.

Careless as Lady Anne was of literary reputation, she could not but derive satisfaction



from appreciation so honourable and so unexpected. Added to the gratification was the pretty puzzle of where the Author of "Waverley" could have read or heard the second part of "Auld Robin Gray," when she had not made a single friend proud by the possession of a copy.

Lady Anne wrote to Sir Walter, with the arch request "that you will convey to the Author of 'Waverley,' with whom I am informed you are personally acquainted, how gratefully I feel the kindness with which he has (in the second volume of the 'Pirate,' thirteenth chapter) so distinguishedly noticed, and by his powerful authority assigned, the long-contested ballad of 'Auld Robin Gray' to its real author."

She confessed that the position in which she had placed herself with regard to the song, had at last become irksome to her. She asked how she could so fully mark her thankfulness to him who had relieved her from her dilemma, as by transmitting to him (more than half a century after the incident had happened) fairly and frankly the origin, birth, life, death, and confession, will and testament of "Auld Robin



Gray," with the assurance that the Author of "Waverley" was the first person out of her own family who had ever had any explanation from her on the subject. She then entered into the details of the composition of both parts of the ballad, and announced her conjecture that it was through Mrs. Murray Keith, her own and her mother's friend, and his friend also, that several verses of the second part had reached the Author of "Waverley." Lady Anne referred to the existence of another version of the second part from Jeanie's own lips, but promised that "that which has been already so highly honoured as to be placed where it is, shall for ever keep its ground with me, and the other shall remain in the corner of my portfolio." The end of the letter is characteristic:—

"Let me now once more, my dear sir, entreat that you will prevail on the Author of 'Waverley' to accept, in testimony of my most grateful thanks, of the only copies of this ballad ever given under the hand of the writer; and will *you* call here, I pray, when you come next to

London, sending up your name that you may not be denied. You will then find the doors open wide to receive you, and two people will shake hands who are unacquainted with *ennui*—the one being innocently occupied from morning to night, the other with a splendid genius as his companion wherever he goes.

“God bless you!

“ANNE BARNARD.”

Sir Walter responded readily to this letter: gave an account of his antecedents where the song was concerned, and identified himself with Lady Anne's youthful days and recollections. Afterwards Lady Anne wrote to him, as he told Basil Hall, one of the kindest letters he had ever received, and a good deal of agreeable correspondence passed between them. One result of it was the printing and circulating by Sir Walter, with Lady Anne's permission, of “Auld Robin Gray,” in a thin quarto volume, among the members of the Bannatyne Club of 1824. But the meeting which Lady Anne had desired never took place.

Lady Anne found occupation to the end—she was so enamoured of occupation that she had a paper expressly recommending it—among what she called her vagrant scraps. In it she wrote, “When alone, I am not above five-and-twenty. I can entertain myself with a succession of inventions, which would be more effective if they were fewer. I forget that I am sixty-eight, and if by chance I see myself in the glass looking very abominable—I do not care. What is the moral of this? That as far as my poor experience goes (and it is said that we must all be fools or physicians at forty), occupation is the best nostrum in the great laboratory of human life for pains, cares, mortifications, and *ennui*.”

Lady Anne had written other verses besides “Auld Robin Gray;” “Where tarries my Love?” doubtless, among them. It is said that at Sir Walter Scott’s request she made a collection of these, and of similar verses by other members of her family, and had gone so far as to prepare for the press a volume, entitled, “Lays of the Lindsays.” But the halting in-

decision which formed part of her character, and perhaps a little scorn for intellectual influence in women—apart from the *rôle* of *dame de société*, which she had played well in her day — interfered, and the volume was suppressed.

As illustrative of this scornful phase in Lady Anne's character, one remembers the words, half jesting as they were, "with which," in the sentence of a descendant, "the authoress closed an impertinent cross-examination to which the secretary of some antiquarian society, deputed to inquire into the matter, had subjected her." (She herself described the interview in a better spirit to Sir Walter Scott, explaining that Mr. J—— had endeavoured to entrap the truth from her in a manner which she had resented; but had he asked the question obligingly, she would have told him the fact distinctly but confidentially.) Her words were:—"The ballad in question has in my opinion met with attention beyond its deserts. It set off with having a very fine tune put to it by a doctor of music; was sung by

youth and beauty for five years and more ; had a romance composed from it by a man of eminence ; was the subject of a play, of an opera, of a pantomime ; was sung by the united armies in America, acted by Punch, and afterwards danced by dogs in the street—but *never more honoured than by the present investigation.*”

The task which Lady Anne had finally set herself was to sort the family papers for family perusal—to carry them forward by her own recollections, and by procuring from her brothers narratives and anecdotes of their experiences.

How many suns had set, and on what different coasts, since the child Lady Anne stood on tip-toe in her blue and yellow brocade, with round eyes and mouth, and defied frost-nips to fingers and toes, while she inspected curiously the unpacking of the red-nosed Laird of Macfarlane's contribution of the store in the plaiden bundle, which was carefully deposited in Earl James's closet a little later ! The girl sympathised half ignorantly in the eagerness with which her father forgot asthma

and gout, in order to turn over the musty packets, every now and then clutching and gloating on a treasure.

“It was a sweet satisfaction” to Lady Anne, her brother Lord Balcarres observed, that as she advanced in years, she not only realised the enjoyment of life in a delightful amusement, but had also the gratifying and conscious pleasure that she was obeying the earnest wish of her honoured father, who, knowing her ability, had urged her to continue a family record of which he had set an example.

Lady Anne’s own statement was:—“I took up my pen and wrote—at first with a little pain. To turn back in fancy to the season of rose-buds and myrtles, and to find one’s self travelling on in reality to that of snow-drops and cypresses, is a position which may naturally produce some inequality of style—the more so as I was often tempted by the gaiety and truthfulness of my old journals to transcribe from them *verbatim*, while on other occasions I have allowed the prudent and concise pen of the old lady to lop and abridge in a manner that I fear



has greatly injured the spirit and originality of the work, though it has brought it into a more reasonable compass."

Lady Anne's task was highly congenial to her. She had in full what she termed "the family taste of spinning from the brain in the sanctum of the closet." She was persuaded of the truth of old Earl James's dogma, that "as every man has felt, thought, invented, or observed, a little of that genius which we receive from nature, or a little of that experience which we buy in our walk through life, if bequeathed to the community, would ultimately become a collection to do honour to the family where such records are preserved." No papers on earth could have had to her a tithe of the interest implied in the papers of the family in the honour and prosperity of which she was "built up." Her "serene, placid, and contented old age" was not rendered melancholy by pondering on the days that were no more. Lady Anne cherished a bright conviction of lasting re-union with the family she had loved so well. Thus dwelling on old stories, and



surrounded in fancy by dear old faces in the dear old home, death, not unwelcome, found her.

Lady Anne Barnard died in 1825, in the house in Berkeley Square so long occupied by Lady Anne and Lady Margaret, and shortly after the death of her brother, Earl Alexander, at Haigh Hall, Lancashire. Lady Anne's brother, Charles, Bishop of Kildare, and her sister, Elizabeth, Countess of Hardwicke,\* with the longevity of not a few of their predecessors, survived—the last of Lady Anne's generation—till far down in the present century.

In her prose composition Lady Anne's style reaches that degree of excellence when one ceases to think of style. It is always natural and graphic. As a family biographer, while she is sensible, candid, tender, and witty, she is not quite free from the usual faults of family biographers, verbiage and partiality. But, unquestionably, as her recollections were written for the family circle, they are entitled

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\* Said to have been the last survivor of the children painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

to more allowance on these points. The inequality of style, which she herself detected, peeps out, and the expression of her thoughts is more apt to be rambling and disjointed than when they were laid before the reader with the vivid simplicity and humour of her *Cape Journal*.

“Auld Robin Gray” was one of those happy hits of genius, by which at a stroke, almost without trouble and in unconsciousness, a result is produced which no amount of labour could add to or improve. Wherever Scotchmen dwell, wherever the Scotch language is understood, even by those who are not Scotch by birth and belongings, “Auld Robin Gray” is prized as being what Sir Walter Scott called it, “a real pastoral, which is worth all the dialogues Corydon and Phillis have had together from the days of Theocrites downwards.” Versions of “Auld Robin Gray” are almost as numerous and various as its admirers, but Sir Walter Scott and Lord Lindsay have preserved the original. Modern taste frequently omits the first

verse, fitting introduction to the story though it is :—

“ When the sheep are in the fauld, when the kye’s a’ at hame,  
And a’ the weary warld to rest are gane,  
The woes o’ my heart fa’ in showers frae my e’e,  
Unkent by my gudeman, wha sleeps sound by me.”

With regard to the incident—“To mak the crown a pound,” Lady Anne informed Sir Walter Scott that the old Laird of Dalzell gave her a lawyer’s advice, the antiquarian acumen of which delighted her. “My dear,” he said to her in *tête-à-tête*, “the next time you sing that song alter the line about the crown and the pound; and when you have said that ‘saving a crown’ Jamie ‘had naething else beside,’ be sure that you add ‘to mak it twenty marks my Jamie gaed to sea,’—for a Scotch pund, my dear, is but twenty pence, and Jamie wasna siccan a gowk as to leave Jeanie and gang to sea to lessen his gear. ’Twas that sentence,” he whispered, “telled me the song was written by some bonnie lassie that didna ken the nature o’ the Scotch money as well as

an auld writer in the town o' Edinbro' would hae done."

Sir Walter's commentary on the advice is equally good. "I think Dalzell's criticism rather hypercritical, but very characteristic. . . . A crown, I would say, is no denomination of Scotch money, and therefore the pound to which it is to be augmented is not a Scotch pound. If it were objected to my exposition that it is unnatural that Jamie should speak of any other denomination of coin than the Scotch, I would produce you a dozen of old papers to prove that the coast of Fife in ancient times carried on a great trade with Holland and other countries, and of course French crowns and pounds sterling were current denominations among them. Moreover, he shows himself so ready to gang to sea, that, for aught I can tell, or Dalzell either (if he were alive), Jamie may have gone a trial voyage already, and speaks rather as a mariner than in the usual style of 'poor Scotland's gear.'"

In the line—

"His ship was a wrack—why didna Jamie dee?"

the name is commonly tampered with, and not, as Sir Walter Scott thought, to the improvement of the original. "I observe an alteration in 'Auld Robin' in an important passage," he remonstrated, referring to the copy which Lady Anne herself had sent him.

" 'His ship was a wrack—why didna Jeanie dee ?' "

I have usually heard or read it 'Why didna Jamie dee ?' I am not quite sure whether in their mutual distress the wish that Jamie had not survived, beloved as he was, is not more deeply pathetic than that which she utters for her own death. Besides, Jamie's death is immediately connected with the shipwreck, and her own more remotely so."

"Your query," replied Lady Anne, "is a very natural one. When I wrote it first it was 'Why didna Jamie dee ?' Would he not have been happier dead than seeing my wretchedness and feeling his own ? But the pens of others have changed this to their own fancy. . . . I feel the justness of your criticism, and from the first meant it to be as you recommend it."

The wistfulness of "auld Robin's " petition,

"Jeanie, for their sakes, will ye *no* marry me?"

is decidedly marred by the ordinary omission, small as it is, of the "no."

The two verses which contain the woefully summed-up tragedy have sustained transformation and mutilation :

"My father urged me sair—my mother didna speak,  
But she looket in my face till my heart was like to break ;  
They gied him my hand—my heart was *in* [not *at*] the sea—  
And so Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

"I hadna been his wife a week but only four,"

"When " (not "sitting so mournfully at a neighbour's door,") but

"mournfu' as I sat on the stane at my door,  
I saw my Jamie's ghaist, for I couldna think it he,  
Till he said, 'I'm come hame, love, to marry thee.'"

Whoever has seen the primitive seat, common in the locality of the song, will witness to the superiority of the first version.

The next verse has suffered much ; it is generally rendered—

"Oh, sair did we greet, and mickle did we say,  
We took but ae kiss and tore oursel's away ;

I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee,  
And auld Robin Gray is gudeman to me."

Lady Anne wrote it with more telling touches :—

" Oh ! sair, sair did we greet, and mickle say o' a',  
I *gi'ed him ae kiss* and *bade* him gang awa' ;  
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee,  
For tho' my heart is broken, I'm young, woe's me ! "

There can be no doubt that the song ends fitly with the verse—

" I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin,  
I darena think on Jamie, for that would be a sin ;  
But I'll do my best a gude wife to be,  
For oh ! Robin Gray he is kind to me."

Though it may sound paradoxical, the completeness of the song as a work of art lies not only in the fatal chain of circumstances to which the innocent lovers are victims, but in their faithful submission to inevitable misfortune, and the struggle after duty, which is sure to be triumphant in the end, though it be a thorn-crowned triumph. Jamie consents to relinquish Jeanie, and Jeanie resolves to be a good wife to the husband who is good to her.



According to such a true and noble conclusion of the whole matter, Auld Robin Gray is an innocent victim like the others in the common calamity which has befallen them. There is no escape from it save by each sufferer trying like Jeanie to do his or her best. With that key the lock of their prison-house of circumstances is opened, and the riddle of their hapless destiny in a measure solved. The whisper is heard that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory."

It was a grievous blunder to write a second part to "Auld Robin Gray." Lady Anne herself suspected it. It was a more grievous blunder still, as detracting from the perfect innocence of the victims, to make auld Robin the treacherous villain of the tragedy. Had the second part of "Auld Robin Gray" become popular, the world would have owed no thanks to the Laird of Dalzell for putting the idea into Lady Anne's head. It was his angry exclamation on listening to the first part of the song:

“Oh! the villain! Oh! the auld rascal! I ken wha stealt the poor cow—it was auld Robin Gray himsel’!”—which tempted her to murder her own creation by criminating Jeanie’s kindly gudeman. But the world was right in never greatly favouring the second part of “Auld Robin Gray,” either in part or as a whole.

If one can at all forgive the blunder of a second part, it has verses not unworthy of the author of “Auld Robin Gray.” The first three verses have beauty of their own, and so have the lines which detail the theft of the cow, and the concluding verses.

“ I cared not for Crummie, I thought but o’ thee—  
I thought it was Crummie stood ’twixt you and me.”

“ How truth soon or late comes to open daylight !  
For Jamie cam’ back, and your cheek it grew white—  
White, white grew your cheek, but aye true unto me—  
Ay, Jeanie ! I’m thankfu’, I’m thankfu’ to dee.”

“ The first days were dowie while time slipt awa’,  
But saddest and sairest to Jeanie o’ a’  
Was thinkin’ she couldna be honest and right,  
Wi’ tears in her e’e while her heart was sae light.”

One hears no more of the second or third

version of this sequel, which was “from Jeanie’s own lips,” and which Lady Anne mentioned to Sir Walter Scott; but there is a comical French version of the original song by Florian, printed in the “Lives of the Lindsays.” It begins,—

“ Quand les moutons sont dans la bergerie,  
Que le sommeil aux humains est si doux,  
Je pleure, hélas ! les chagrins de ma vie,  
Et près de moi dort mon bon vieux époux.”

### AULD ROBIN GRAY.

WHEN the sheep are in the fauld, when the kye’s a’ at  
hame,  
And a’ the weary warld to rest are gane,  
The woes o’ my heart fa’ in showers frae my e’e,  
Unkent by my gudeman, wha sleeps sound by me.

Young Jamie lo’ed me weel, and sought me for his bride,  
But saving a crown he had naething else beside;  
To mak the crown a pound my Jamie gaed to sea,  
And the crown and the pound—they were baith for me.

He hadna been gane a twelvemonth and a day  
When my father brake his arm, and the cow was stown  
away ;

My mother she fell sick—my Jamie was at sea—  
And Auld Robin Gray came a-courting me.

My father couldna work, my mother couldna spin,  
I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win ;  
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and, wi' tears in his e'e,  
Said, " Jeanie, for their sakes, will ye no marry me ? "

My heart it said na, and I looked for Jamie back,  
But hard blew the winds, and his ship was a wrack ;  
His ship was a wrack—why didna Jamie dee ?  
Or why am I spared to cry, Woe is me ?

My father urged me sair—my mother didna speak,  
But she looket in my face till my heart was like to break ;  
They gied him my hand—my heart was in the sea—  
And so Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been his wife a week but only four,  
When, mournfu' as I sat on the stane at my door,  
I saw my Jamie's ghaist, for I couldna think it he,  
Till he said, " I'm come hame, love, to marry thee. "

Oh ! sair, sair did we greet, and mickle say o' a',  
I gi'ed him ae kiss and bade him gang awa'.  
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee,  
For tho' my heart is broken, I'm young, woe's me !

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin,  
I darena think on Jamie, for that would be a sin ;  
But I'll do my best a gude wife to be,  
For oh ! Robin Gray he is kind to me.

## SECOND PART.

The winter was come, 'twas simmer nae mair,  
And, trembling, the leaves were fleeing thro' the air ;  
"Oh, winter," says Jeanie, "we kindly agree,  
For the sun he looks wae when he shines upon me."

Nae longer she mourned, her tears were a' spent,  
Despair it was come, and she thought it content—  
She thought it content, but her cheek it grew pale,  
And she bent like a lily broke down by the gale.

Her father and mother observed her decay ;  
"What ails ye, my bairn ?" they oftentimes would say ;  
"Ye turn round your wheel, but you come little speed,  
For feeble's your hand and silly's your thread."

She smiled when she heard them, to banish their fear,  
But wae looks the smile that is seen through a tear,  
And bitter's the tear that is forced by a love  
Which honour and virtue can never approve.

Her father was vexed and her mother was wae,  
But pensive and silent was auld Robin Gray ;  
He wandered his lane, and his face it grew lean,  
Like the side of a brae where the torrent has been.

Nae questions he spiered her concerning her health,  
He looked at her often, but aye 'twas by stealth ;  
When his heart it grew grit, and often he feigned  
To gang to the door to see if it rained.

He took to his bed—nae physic he sought,  
But ordered his friends all around to be brought ;  
While Jeanie supported his head in its place,  
Her tears trickled down and fell on his face.

“ Oh, greet nae mair, Jeanie,” said he wi’ a groan,  
“ I’m no worth your sorrow—the truth maun be known ;  
Send round for your neighbours, my hour it draws near,  
And I’ve that to tell that it’s fit a’ should hear.

“ I’ve wrong’d her,” he said, “ but I kent it ower late,  
I’ve wronged her, and sorrow is speeding my date ;  
But a’ for the best, since my death will soon free  
A faithfu’ young heart that was ill matched wi’ me.

“ I lo’ed and I courted her mony a day,  
The auld folks were for me, but still she said nay ;  
I kentna o’ Jamie, nor yet of her vow,  
In mercy forgive me—’twas I stole the cow.

“ I cared not for Crummie, I thought but o’ thee—  
I thought it was Crummie stood ’twixt you and me ;  
While she fed your parents, oh, did you not say  
You never would marry wi’ auld Robin Gray ?

“ But sickness at hame and want at the door—  
You gied me your hand, while your heart it was sore ;  
I saw it was sore, why took I her hand ?  
Oh, that was a deed to my shame o’er the land !

“ How truth soon or late comes to open daylight !  
For Jamie cam’ back and your cheek it grew white—  
White, white grew your cheek, but aye true unto me—  
Ay, Jeanie, I’m thankfu’—I’m thankfu’ to dee.

“ Is Jamie come here yet ? ” and Jamie they saw—  
“ I’ve injured you sair, lad, so leave me you may a’ ;  
Be kind to my Jeanie, and soon may it be ;  
Waste nae time, my dauties, in mourning for me.”

They kissed his cauld hands, and a smile o’er his face  
Seemed hopefu’ of being accepted by grace ;  
“ Oh, doubtna,” said Jamie, “ forgi’en he will be—  
Wha wouldna be tempted, my love, to win thee ? ”

\* \* \* \* \*

The first days were dowie while time slipt awa’,  
But saddest and sairest to Jeanie o’ a’  
Was thinkin’ she couldna be honest and right,  
Wi’ tears in her e’e while her heart was sae light.

But nae guile had she, and her sorrow away,  
The wife of her Jamie the tear couldna stay ;  
A bonnie wee bairn—the auld folks by the fire—  
Oh, now she has a’ that her heart can desire.



## LE VIEUX ROBIN GRAY.

Quand les moutons sont dans la bergerie,  
Que le sommeil aux humains est si doux,  
Je pleure, hélas ! les chagrins de ma vie,  
Et près de moi dort mon bon vieux époux.

Jame m'aimait,—pour prix de sa constance  
Il eut mon cœur ; mais Jame n'avait rien ;  
Il s'embarqua dans la seule espérance  
A tant d'amour de joindre un peu de bien.

Après un an notre vache est volée—  
Le bras cassé mon père rentre un jour—  
Ma mère était malade et désolée,  
Et Robin Gray vint me faire la cour.

Le pain manquait dans ma pauvre retraite,  
Robin nourrit mes parens malheureux.  
La larme à l'œil, il me disait, “ Jeannette,  
Epouse moi du moins pour l'amour d'eux ! ”

Je disais, “ Non, pour Jame je respire ; ”  
Mais son vaisseau sur mer vint à périr ;  
Et j'ai vécu—je vis encore pour dire,  
“ Malheur à moi de n'avoir pu mourir ! ”

Mon père alors parla du mariage—  
Sans en parler ma mère l'ordonna :

Mon pauvre cœur était mort du naufrage,  
Ma main restait—mon père la donna.

Un mois après, devant ma porte assise  
Je revois Jame, et je crus m'abuser.  
“C'est moi,” dit-il, “pourquoi tant de surprise ?  
Ma chère amour, je reviens t'épouser !”

Ah ! que de pleurs ensemble nous versâmes !  
Un seul baiser, suivi d'un long soupir,  
Fut notre adieu—tous deux nous répétâmes,  
“Malheur à moi de n'avoir pu mourir !”

Je ne ris plus, j'écarte de mon âme  
Le souvenir d'un amant si chéri ;  
Je veux tâcher d'être une bonne femme,  
Le vieux Robin est un si bon mari.

## CAROLINA BARONESS NAIRNE.

1766—1845.

THE grandly outlined, richly wooded Strath of the Earn, lying between the Grampians and the Ochils, with Ben Voirlich for its landmark, was verily a stronghold of Jacobite lords and lairds. Athol Murrays, Perth Drummonds, Robertsons, Oliphants, and Menzieses, were “out” either in the ’74 or the ’45, or in both those years of rebellion. Some of the Strath families never recovered the losses consequent on their clannish fidelity to the Stuarts and their dogged, unreasoning opposition to the House of Hanover. Highland Scotland north of the Tay was quite another country from the lowlands of Scotland south of the Forth, which had Tweedside on the right and Clydesdale on the left, and Highland Scotland had altogether different interests

and associations. Trade and commerce, political freedom, and men's individual rights, had no footing in old Strathearn. Tender and true as the feudal bond might prove in honest hands, it was but a version of serfdom, with a burden of heavy evils both to chief and vassal. In Strathearn, the Roman Catholic religion lingered, and Episcopacy, abjured elsewhere, flourished here. Those battles on national questions of liberty of conscience and the rights of the Kirk, which had been fought so gallantly on many a moorland field, and in many a burgh street of the south, had never penetrated into the great northern strath, made up of wild tracts of deer forest and minor glens, each with its tributary stream, its green meadows, its hanging woods, and the castle of its local chief. Each Drummond, Murray, or Oliphant—unless, indeed, the houses were divided against themselves—thought and fought on the side of his feudal head, and that as a matter of first duty. If there were exceptions among the clansmen, the traditions of the district prove how these exceptions were regarded and with what

a high hand they were put down. One well-known tradition will have it that Lord Perth shot down a man who dared to have a mind of his own on the propriety of "rising" and following Prince Charlie. Another, which refers to Lady Nairne's grandfather, asserts that some tenants of Gask having had sufficient whiggery and sagacity to object to the landing in Moidart, as foreseeing the end, the laird took steps to intimidate the pestilent fellows by prohibiting them from cutting down the ripe crops on their little farms, while the cattle were starving in the stalls.

In such a region, surrounded by such a single-handed, one-ideaed people, Carolina, Baroness Nairne, was born in 1766. She was doubly and trebly of Jacobite antecedents. The Oliphants of Gask, her father's house; the Robertsons of Strowan, her mother's house; the Nairnes of Nairne, cousins of both Oliphants and Robertsons, had every one of them been in trouble and exile. One of these Nairnes, Captain Nairne in default of the forfeited titles and estates of his ancestors, was Carolina's kinsman, lover, husband. These

families had literally sailed in the same boat, having most of them escaped in one ship from the east coast of Scotland to Sweden, in the desperation of 1746. The marriages of cousins once and again, as in the alliances of royal houses, had rendered more stringent and inveterate the hereditary cast of mind. Carolina Oliphant's father and mother were married at Versailles, when the Oliphants and the Robertsons were still attached to the court of St. Germain. The couple were soon enabled to return home; but Carolina was a blooming girl of eighteen before her grandfather and grandmother, on the Robertsons' side, had their outlawry removed, and were suffered, by the clemency of a German George, to exchange their banishment at Givet for their own house at Strowan. These circumstances might have had the effect of introducing a foreign element into the characters of the brave, fair, and witty partisans of the Chevalier de St. George and Charles Edward; but it does not seem that the Oliphants imbibed much French culture. Like the earlier Stuarts and the later Bourbons, they came back as they had gone

away, having learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. They were Jacobites of the Jacobites, chiefs and aristocrats of the purest water, with all the virtues and all the faults of such a creed and calling.

Carolina Oliphant, in her songs for the people, vindicated nobly the genuine humanity of true nobility, and the strong, sweet sympathies of a patriarchal life. But Carolina Oliphant also was a grand dame. The blue blood in her veins ran very blue. In her stateliness as a bride, she put aside with some impatience and vexation the kiss of her cousin and bridegroom, as being too bold and public an assertion of the rights which she had just given him. She had even a greater horror than Lady Anne Lindsay cherished of being reduced to the level of literary publicity, and of being exposed to rude praise and blame along with the common herd of authors. Not only was she a woman,—and authorship was counted unfeminine by these great ladies,—she was also a lady, an Oliphant, a Nairne. Lady Nairne did not so much as confide to Lord Nairne the secret which would



have made his heart proud, if he were a match for his wife in genius and feeling. She did not even tell him that she was the author of "The Land o' the Leal," lest his honest gratification should tempt him to betray the truth. We dwell under another régime now, and the bluest blood runs warm and kind; for the Queen of the land does not fear to put her private Journal with her name attached to it into her people's hands, in right royal frankness and simplicity.

The quaintly picturesque old house of Gask is built on a brae above the Earn, with a bonnie "burnie" wandering and winding close by, among the groves and wildernesses of ancient landscape gardening. More than a century ago, a lock of Prince Charlie's hair, his bonnet, spurs, cockade, and crucifix, were cherished there as dearest relics. The "auld laird," Carolina's father, obstinately repudiated any acknowledgment of the Elector of Hanover as sovereign of these realms. He dismissed an English clergyman who, on the death of Charles Edward, took the oath of allegiance

to George III., from officiating as chaplain at Gask. The laird even then continued to cling to the gown and cardinal's hat of Cardinal Stewart, at Rome,—wildly, wilfully hoping that they might yet be merged into a crown and coronation robes when the priest should sit on the British throne as Henry IX. In return, King George, who could afford to be good-natured, sent this message through the member for Perthshire:—"The Elector of Hanover's compliments to the Laird of Gask, and wishes to tell him how much the Elector respects the Laird for the steadiness of his principles."

We first hear of Carolina as named in fond fanaticism for the gallant, but frail hero of her house. She was "sturdy little Car" when two years old, and her mother speaks of her having been taken for a space from the Gask nursery, and "sitting on a chair as prim as any there at the reading, this evening being Sunday." Carolina was the third of a family of six children, four daughters and two sons. Marjory, or "Maj," and Amelia were her

seniors, and "Laurie," the young laird, Margaret, and Charles, her juniors. The children had the misfortune to lose their mother when "little Car" was only eight years of age. "Lady Gask's" last speech to her bairns was beautiful in its motherly, wifely kindness:—"See which will be the best bairn and stay longest with papa." Lady Gask's place was supplied in a degree, first, by old Lady Gask, the children's grandmother on the father's side, and then by their grandmother's sister, the young Oliphants' grand-aunt, Miss Henrietta Nairne. The girls had a Mrs. Cramond from Perth for their governess, to impart to them the practice of "y<sup>e</sup> needle, principles of religion, and loyalty, a good carriage, and talking tolerable good English," with the remuneration of from ten to twelve guineas a-year. A "fiddler," foreign evidently, a Mr. Marconchi, came out also once a week to Gask, that the young people might get their dancing lessons, and possibly music lessons, on the harpsichord or guitar. In the latter branch of polite education, "little Car," who had developed into "pretty Miss

Car” of the schoolroom, was an adept and enthusiast, her taste and skill winning the approbation of Niel Gow, himself the king of Scotch fiddlers. “Pretty Miss Car” passed soon into a county belle and beauty, styled in the sentimentality of the day “the Flower of Strathearn.” She was tall in figure and dignified in gait, had dark eyes and hair, an aquiline nose, and small mouth. Her arms and hands were fine. Her portrait painted, in middle life, by Watson Gordon, gives the idea of an aristocratic beauty, sensitive but self-controlled. Her sister, writing of Lady Nairne’s appearance in advanced age, remarked that she was still “very *distingué* in brow and nose.”

There was ample scope for the gaieties and the conquests of a county belle in the country houses—mostly those of kinsmen as well as of friends—around Gask. These houses were occupied by resident lairds’ families for almost the entire year. The marriages of Carolina Oliphant’s elder sisters to two loyal Stewarts—lairds of neighbouring glens—widened the family ties. Two additional homes were added

to that of her grandfather, the restored Laird of Strowan, where Carolina was the young lady, the pride and darling of the house. The departure of her elder sisters to houses of their own, left her, "to the manner born" as she was, the elegant and lively mistress of Gask. For her surroundings at this period, and for the kind of festivity in which she joined, Lady Nairne has herself supplied us with an animated hint in her "County Meeting."

"Ye're welcome, leddies, ane and a',  
Ye're welcome to our County Ha';  
Sae weel ye look when buskit braw  
    To grace our County Meeting!  
An', gentlemen, ye're welcome too,  
In waistcoats white and tartan too,  
Gae seek a partner, mak' yer bow,  
    Syne dance our County Meeting.

"Ah, weel dune now, there's auld Sir John,  
Wha aye maun lead the dancin' on,  
An' Liddy Bet, wi' her turban prim,  
An' wee bit velvet 'neath her chin;  
See how they nimbly, nimbly go!  
While youngsters follow in a row,  
Wi' mony a belle an' mony a beau,  
    To dance our County Meeting.

“ There’s the Major, and his sister too,  
He in the bottle-green, she in the blue ;  
(Some years sin’ syne that gown was new  
At our County Meeting.)  
They are a worthy canty pair,  
An’ unco proud o’ their nephew Blair,  
O’ sense or siller he’s nae great share,  
Tho’ he’s the King o’ the Meeting.

“ An’ there’s our member, and provost Whig,  
Our doctor in his yellow wig,  
Wi his fat wife, wha taks a jig  
Aye at our County Meeting.  
Miss Betty, too, I see her there,  
Wi’ her sonsy face and bricht red hair,  
Dancin’ till she can dance nae mair  
At our County Meeting.

“ There’s beauty Bell wha a’ surpasses,  
An’ heaps o’ bonnie country lasses,  
Wi’ the heiress o’ the Gowdenlea—  
Folk say she’s unco dorty.  
Lord Bawbee aye he’s lookin’ there,  
An’ sae is the Major and Major’s heir,  
Wi’ the Laird, the Shirra, an’ mony mair,  
I could reckon them to forty.

“ See Major O’Neill has got her hand,  
An’ in the dance they’ve ta’en their stand  
(‘ Impudence comes frae Paddy’s land,’  
Say the lads o’ our County Meeting) ;

But ne'er ye fash, gang thro' the reel,  
The country-dance, ye dance sae weel,  
An' ne'er let waltz or dull quadrille  
Spoil our County Meeting.

“ Afore we end, strike up the spring  
O' Thulichan and Hieland fling,  
The Haymakers and Bumpkin fine,  
At our County Meeting.  
Gow draws his bow, folk haste away,  
While some are glad and some are wae,  
A' blithe to meet some ither day  
At our County Meeting.”

And was not the trouble in “Jamie the Laird”—  
a county belle's dilemma—perhaps a leaf from  
the lady's own experience?—

“ Send a horse to the water, ye'll no mak him drink ;  
Send a fule to the college, ye'll no mak him think ;  
Send a craw to the singin', an' still he will craw ;  
An' the wee laird had nae rummelgumshion ava.  
Yet he is the pride o' his fond mother's e'e,  
In body or mind nae faut can she see ;  
' He's a fell clever lad an' a bonnie wee man,'  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.  
An' oh ! she's a haverin' Lucky, I trow,  
An' oh ! she's a haverin' Lucky, I trow.  
' He's a fell clever lad an' a bonnie wee man,'  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.



“ His legs they are bowed, his een they do glee,  
His wig, whiles it's aff, and when on it's agee,  
He's braid as he's lang, an' ill-faur'd is he,  
A dafter like body I never did see.  
An' yet for this cratur she says I am deein';  
When that I deny, she's fear'd at my leein';  
Obliged to put up wi' this sair defamation,  
I'm liken to dee wi' grief an' vexation.  
An' oh ! she's a haverin' Lucky, etc.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Frien's, gie yer advice, I'll follow yer counsel,  
Maun I speak to the provost or honest town-council ?  
Or the writers, or lawyers, or doctors ? now say ;  
For the law on the Lucky I shall an' will hae.  
The hale town at me are jibin' an' jeerin',  
For a leddy like me it's really past bearin'.  
The Lucky maun now hae done wi' her claverin',  
For I'll no put up wi' her nor her haverin' ;  
For oh ! she's a randy, I trow, I trow,  
For oh ! she's a randy, I trow, I trow.  
' He's a fell clever lad an' a bonnie wee man,'  
Is aye the beginnin' an' end o' her sang.”

In these days Carolina Oliphant had her share of suitors ; but she early pledged herself (impelled by characteristic motives of proud devotion, disinterestedness, and decision) to wait for the promotion of her cousin, Captain Nairne, who was nine years her senior, in order to become the wife of a landless soldier of fortune.

The arch-Jacobite chief, her father, whom Carolina has painted with tender touches as "the auld laird" of one of her best songs, "The Auld House," died, full of years, and of the deserved regard of his children and his people, on the New Year's Day of 1792, when Carolina was twenty-five years of age.

A year later, while Carolina still presided over the house of Gask—now her eldest brother Laurence's house—he celebrated his accession by a dinner to his tenantry, and sang to them a new version of an old Scotch ditty, "The Ploughman," by an unknown author. This song is stated to have been Carolina Oliphant's first attempt in the art of song-writing; and the inducement to the attempt has received an explanation. She already knew and appreciated Robert Burns as a poet, and she had induced her brother, the laird, to subscribe for one of the earlier editions of his poems. She had an especial interest in those gems of song which he was setting to old admired airs, and which had been previously spoilt by being unworthily linked to gross or mean words.

Driving through a country fair near Gask, Carolina Oliphant saw in the hands of many of the people a common song-book, which as she judged, was full of coarseness and folly. Such song-books had long been the lighter literature of the people, and she was fired with the ambition of becoming in her turn a purifier of Scotch songs. She would do it in strictest secrecy, preserving her aristocratic and womanly reserve unbroken; and, while utterly unknown as an author, she would aid in raising the standard of taste and morals in the rustic world. The motive was honourable to authorship; and Carolina Oliphant, while she remained, as she wished, a nameless bard for at least one generation, had the reward which she prized for its intrinsic worth. She divided largely with Burns the gracious honour of re-writing many old songs, so that they came home to thousands of hearts, refining and elevating them. But, while Carolina Oliphant's indifference, and even aversion to the fame of authorship is patent, her voluntary acceptance of so difficult a task is not in harmony

with the assumption of "excessive diffidence," as the cause of her persistent secrecy in writing.

Carolina is supposed to have set herself first to the writing of merry and humorous songs. Probably to this period belong her "John Tod" and her inimitable "Laird of Cockpen." Naturally, too, she at once took to the inditing of spirited and pathetic Jacobite songs. It must be taken into consideration, with regard to the latter, that the Jacobite creed was not far-fetched and fantastic to Carolina Oliphant. Her hero-worship of poor Prince Charlie might be inconsistent with her autocratical condemnation of whatever offended her principles and taste in the old ballads and in the writings of Burns; but it did not so strike her mind, which was fine rather than broad, and did not easily free itself from hereditary prejudices. The delight of her old grandfather of Strowan in the revival and graphic embodiment of the memories of his youth, would suffice to make Jacobitism, after its last hope had died out in ashes, a real and still present power to Carolina Oliphant. Thus her Jacobite songs are

not affected, or elaborate with meretricious ornament, or overlaid with mock sentiment. They are among the last of the earnest Jacobite songs. They are almost as earnest as those written at the era of the Rebellion. They are spontaneous lyrics, possessing unity and fire, and true and simple feeling.

But whether Carolina Oliphant's songs were patriotic, in her sense of the word, or purely sportive, she was happily busy with her self-imposed task. In the midst of her duties as the mistress of a hospitable Highland country house, and her gaieties as an acknowledged county toast, she sat and wrote often and long at her desk. She remained silent as to what she wrote. She was eminently a woman who could keep her own counsel, and, by the spell of her birth, breeding, beauty, and wit, could ward off every unauthorised approach to her confidence. Her intimate friends imagined that she was busy writing letters to her cousin, Captain Nairne, to whom it was always "*understood*" that she was engaged in marriage.

Three years after her father's death, when

Carolina was twenty-nine, her brother Laurence married the heiress of Ardblair. Carolina was thus called to vacate her post for a successor. But, owing to Captain Nairne's long-delayed promotion, the completion of the cousins' engagement was not yet possible, and Carolina continued to reside with her brother and his wife.

The Laird of Gask had joined the Perthshire Light Dragoons, one of the militia regiments raised to defend the country from mob anarchy during the alarm of Jacobinism, which had come in the room of Jacobitism. In 1797, just as the French Revolution was at its height, the regiment was ordered to quarters in the North of England, and Carolina accompanied the laird and the new lady to Durham. Of the family's residence there a highly romantic, slightly cock-and-bull tradition exists. It is said that Carolina Oliphant, in the mature charms of her thirty-second year, attended a ball at Sunderland, where a Royal Duke—not a Stuart—was present. He was her partner, and became so enamoured of the fair and gifted daughter of



a rebel Highland laird, that only the lady's pre-engaged affections and the Royal Marriage Act saved the gentleman from the terrible indiscretion of laying his ducal coronet at her feet. Is not this story a late edition of that verse of the modernised ballad of "Mally Lee," which caps all Mally's perfections by a triumphant assertion of the fact that

" A duke cam' out frae Holyrood,  
An' danced wi' Mally Lee."

Carolina Oliphant's dancing days were nearly over. She was past her first youth, and we may believe that that high heart of hers, which would not confess its weakness, knew its own bitterness, and was sick with hope deferred. Her younger brother, Charles Oliphant, a handsome, bigoted lad, had persisted in shutting himself out from filling an office under government by refusing to take the abjuration oath. In the same year, 1797, he went abroad, and after drooping in health for some time, died in early manhood at Paris. Another loss by death struck Carolina, in striking one of the few intimate friends for whom her concen-



trated attachments were strong and lasting. This was the death of the first-born and dearly-loved child of Mrs. Campbell Colquhoun—the same Mary Anne Erskine who, while keeping house for her brother William in Edinburgh, had been on very sisterly terms with another advocate, “Earl Walter.” It was in reference to this “bonnie bairn’s” death, and with the intention of consoling the mother, that Caroline wrote and forwarded to Mrs. Campbell Colquhoun (at the same time binding her not to divulge the authorship) the one perfect Scottish hymn, “The Land o’ the Leal.”

The Oliphants returned to Scotland. While Carolina’s mind was sobered, and her heart softened, by her own griefs and those of her friends, she happened to go on a visit to a neighbouring country house. An English clergyman was of the party, and preached on one occasion. His sermon deeply impressed a listener who was in circumstances to render her peculiarly susceptible to tender and devout influences. It seemed to her that she then definitely and permanently laid hold of the hope

set before her; and she continued to look back on the season as that of her spiritual awakening.

Carolina Oliphant dwelt at Gask with her brother and sister-in-law till 1806, when Captain Nairne at last got the brevet-rank of major, and was appointed Assistant Inspector-General of Barracks in Scotland. The constant couple were married during the same summer by the family chaplain, in the new house of Gask. The bride was in her forty-first year, the bridegroom hard on fifty; but bride and bridegroom called for honour, and not pity, since they were of the grain in which loyalty flourishes green and unfading. Carolina Oliphant only shared the fate of the most winning of George III.'s princesses. Pretty, gentle Princess Mary, in the bloom and grace of her twentieth year, won the heart of her cousin William of Gloucester, and gave him her own in return. But the exigencies of the country demanded that Duke William should remain unwedded until the baby Princess Charlotte, heiress of the throne, was grown to woman-

hood, and satisfactorily disposed of in marriage to a Protestant prince. So Princess Mary and Duke William served for each other by that hardest service of waiting—not seven years, but seven and seven again. Immediately after the gala wedding of young Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold, there was another wedding, quiet, almost private,—like that celebrated in the upper room of the new house of Gask,—between Princess Charlotte's aunt and Princess Charlotte's father's cousin. These cousins' marriages, whether in a royal palace or at Gask, had crushed out of them, by the "weary weight" of years, much of the glory and gladness which would have attended on their celebration when brides and bridegrooms were in their prime. Well for both that the true love which is immortal had not failed or swerved aside from youth to middle age, and was still their sure foundation.

Major Nairne is said by Lady Nairne's friends to have been the hero of the two following songs of his wife's:—

## KIND ROBIN LO'ES ME.

Robin is my ain gudeman,  
Now match him, carlins, gin ye can,  
For ilk ane whitest thinks her swan,  
But kind Robin lo'es me.

\* \* \* \*

Robin he comes hame at e'en  
Wi' pleasure glancin' in his een,  
He tells me a' he's heard and seen,  
An' syne how he lo'es me.  
There's some hae land and some hae gowd,  
An' mair wad hae them gin they could,  
But a' I wish o' warld's gude  
Is Robin aye to lo'e me.

## O WEEL'S ME ON MY AIN MAN.

O weel's me on my ain man,  
My ain man, my ain man,  
O weel's me on my ain gudeman,  
He'll aye be welcome hame.

I'm wae I blamed him yesternicht,  
For now my heart is feather licht ;  
For gowd I wadna gie the sicht,  
I see him linkin' ower the hicht.  
O weel's me, &c.

Rin, Jeanie, bring the kebbuck ben,  
An' fin' aneath the speckled hen ;

Meg, rise and sweep about the fire,  
Syne cry on Johnnie frae the byre.  
For weel's me on my ain man,  
My ain man, my ain man,  
For weel's me on my ain gudeman!  
I see him linkin' hame.

If Lady Nairne thus made a compromise with her reserve, and expressed her thoughts and feelings in lowly guise in order to do honour to her husband, the by-play is suggestive—not only of the pride which thus found an excuse for venting its woman's weakness, but of the relief which rank and state have sought in aping humility and rusticity. Thus poor Marie Antoinette retired with her court and courtiers from magnificent Versailles, to get up a mock pastoral of village life at little Trianon.

Major Nairne and his wife resided, by necessity, in Edinburgh. Her old childless grandfather, the Laird of Strowan, had built for his nephew and his grand-daughter in the suburbs a cottage, named, in compliment to Mrs. Nairne, Carolina Cottage. There Carolina Nairne's only child, a son, was born in 1808.

Major and Mrs. Nairne lived in Edinburgh in great retirement. This could not have been entirely from motives of wise economy, since their income was more than sufficient for the small household, and visiting was then a much less expensive process than it is now. The fact was, that at the most literary epoch of the old capital, its society had few attractions for the Highland and Jacobite lady, who had been accustomed to reign as a queen in Strathearn, and to count on the regard of princes and their court—albeit they were banished princes and a mock court. Edinburgh lawyers—though Walter Scott was one of them, and Carolina Nairne's friend, Mary Anne Erskine, had married another—formed a different order of society from that to which Mrs. Nairne had been accustomed. Anne Grant of Laggan, the writer of

“Oh where, and oh where does your Highland laddie dwell?”

was a Highlander, and might dwell within a little distance of Carolina Cottage; Elizabeth Hamilton, planning her works of charity and crooning her “Ain Fireside,” could not live far



off; and Joanna Baillie might come and go to and from Castle Street, exciting some enthusiasm, yet there existed an insurmountable barrier between these women and the woman who, in her songs, showed the kindliness of her common nature, deep down beneath the piled-up obstacles of partisanship and exclusiveness. The inevitable result of such contraction could not be anything else than the production of narrowness and dogmatism, even in a soul naturally generous and high-minded in the best sense.

Among the exceptions which Carolina Nairne made (and it ought to be said, that when she opened her heart it must have been with frankness, simplicity, and rare tenderness) were the Keiths of Ravelston, the old friends and kindred of Sir Walter Scott and Mrs. Cockburn. The Keiths were at this time represented by a hospitable, eccentric elderly brother and sister, who became also family connections of Mrs. Nairne through the marriage of her younger sister Margaret with the brother, the laird of Ravelston. At the Saturday parties at Ravelston, with its stately homeliness and obstinate



conservatism, the daughter of Gask and granddaughter of Strowan was in her element. To members of the county families, neighbours of the Keiths, and especially to one—a young girl with the divine gift of song—the dignified and still beautiful matron was gracious and winning.

The Misses Hume, daughters of Baron Hume, were likewise admitted on intimate terms into the very small and select circle in which Mrs. Nairne moved. These ladies had an important influence on her history where the public are concerned. At the head of the musical society of Edinburgh were the Misses Hume. They were consulted by Mr. Purdie, music dealer, when he proposed, about 1821, to bring out a collection of national airs with suitable words. The Misses Hume consulted in turn their friend Mrs. Nairne, with whose own aspirations the scheme fitted in admirably. The result was the formation of a ladies' committee, the proceedings of which were meant to be shrouded in mystery, and were really long kept in concealment. The members of this committee either supplied Mr. Purdie's songs or

revised them. It is almost unnecessary to say that the presiding genius was Carolina Nairne. No doubt literary puzzles were the fashion of the era, but this well-born and accomplished little clique, who professed, and in general were fully disposed to despise fashions which they themselves did not set, strike the work-a-day men and women of the present generation as being half-supercilious, half-childish in their mummery. Mrs. Nairne assumed the not very euphonious name of Mrs. Bogan of Bogan, and used the non-aristocratic alliterative initials of B. B., in her dealings with the publisher. (Perhaps there was a little humorous hit at her own conscious predilections in the choice of name and initials.) Even this *nom de plume* was whispered charily to Mr. Purdie under the seal of utmost secrecy. Its owner was so much in earnest in her disguise, that she wrote in a feigned hand, and employed other feigned hands to transcribe her MSS. These MSS. she signed variously "B. B.," or "sent by B. B.," or merely "S. M.," the initials of "Scottish Minstrel," the title which Mr. Purdie and the ladies

of the committee had given to the collection. At a later date she wished to shake the evidence that it was a woman who had composed her songs, and writes to one of the committee : "As you observed, the more mystery the better, and still the balance is in favour of 'the lords of the creation.' I cannot help in some degree undervaluing beforehand what is said to be a feminine production." The last sentence is very characteristic of Carolina Nairne and her age. She ventured, however, on personal interviews with Mr. Purdie, at his place of business, as Mrs. Bogan of Bogan. On these occasions she was carefully got up for the occasion as an old country lady of a former generation. One can imagine the dash of fun and frolic with which the former county belle and beauty would engage in this species of masquerading, whether or not she borrowed the idea from the clever mystifications practised with success by Miss Graham Stirling on Scott and Jeffrey. Mrs. Nairne was likewise so successful that Mr. Purdie never dreamed of Mrs. Bogan of Bogan being a lady resident in the same town with himself, and

associated with anything so patent to his senses as Edinburgh Castle.

The "Scottish Minstrel," to which Carolina Nairne contributed largely in songs which would have become famous and far-spread in any language, was completed in six octavo volumes in 1824.

In the course of the publication, and in the delight which B. B.'s songs inspired, there were many questions asked with respect to the author. Some of these were even put in Carolina Nairne's presence. She declared long afterwards that she had not "the Author of *Waverley's*" tact in parrying a question, neither had she the refined sauciness by which Lady Anne Lindsay turned the tables on her assailants. But Carolina Nairne could be silent; and when it was her pleasure to be silent, he or she must have been a bold man or woman who would have pressed her with unrestrained curiosity.

Another work which the committee of gentle ladies thought of taking up, fortunately fell to the ground. This was to lay daringly decorous hands on Burns's songs, and purify them.

During the publication of the "Scottish Minstrel," George IV. visited Scotland. It was a great event to the nation; and among other accompaniments, "Glengarry and his tail" formed the last truly Highland spectacle in the picturesque, eagerly-thronged streets of Edinburgh. At the levee in Holyrood, Major Nairne's relative, the Duke of Athole, presented the major to the King, in late submission to the House of Hanover. Other descendants of attainted nobles took the opportunity to offer their tardy homage. Sir Walter Scott prepared a memorial for them, praying for the removal of the forfeitures of their titles. George, who was not destitute of the earlier German Georges' clemency, received the petition in very good part, and a Bill was passed in 1824 reversing many attainders. Among them was that of the baron's rank of Lord Nairne, which dated from the reign of Charles I., and to which Major Nairne was the heir and immediate successor. Thus Carolina Nairne became a peeress worthy of the honour. But the estate of Nairne, in Strath

Ard, Perthshire, which had been purchased by the Athole Murrays after the '45, was irrevocably lost to the representatives of its original owners. The House of Nairne had been destroyed by James, Duke of Athole, to the indignation of the outlawed Lord Nairne and his son. The belfry—the solitary relic of it which was preserved—had been presented to the town of Perth, where it surmounted King James's Hospital. It was, therefore, a barren honour and a landless lairdship which was restored to Carolina Nairne and her husband. But, with their old Scottish pride of birth and rank, it was a sacred privilege to them only to bear the title, though it had been borne begging their bread. The mockery of the empty distinction was better realised by their son, William, sixth and last Lord Nairne, who visited Nairne in 1834, when he was in his twenty-seventh year, and “spoke mournfully of the reverses of his house.” Doubtless he stood by the Bell-tree, and speculated on what might have been, if the Lord Nairne of the '45 had not there marshalled his tenants and servants, and marched them to fight under



the standard of Prince Charlie; and if the same Prince Charlie, the idol of Carolina Baroness Nairne's romantic imagination, had not dined and slept a night, in his descent from Blair, under that roof-tree of which there was not then a rafter or a stone remaining.

When Lord and Lady Nairne got back their ancestral title, he was in his sixty-sixth and she in her fifty-seventh year; while their son, who was educated privately and with extreme care, was a lad of fourteen years.

Lady Nairne in middle life spent much of her leisure, not only in writing, but in drawing and painting, for which she seems to have had a marked taste.

In 1830 occurred the first of the grievous breaches in Lady Nairne's household. Lord Nairne died at the age of seventy-four. Her son, a delicate lad, a little past his majority, was already showing symptoms of premature decline. In place of entering a profession, he was fain to seek more vigorous health from a milder climate. Lady Nairne has verses on leaving Edinburgh, in which there is a plea-



sant summary of its traits, as they struck her, and a reference to "departed joys," in her case "never to return."

"Fareweel, Edinburgh, where happy we hae been,  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, Caledonia's queen ;  
Auld Reekie, fare ye weel, and Reekie New beside,  
Ye're like a chieftain grim and gray wi' a young bonnie bride.

"Fareweel, Edinburgh, and your trusty Volunteers,  
Your Council a' sae circumspect, your Provost without peers,  
Your stately College, stuff'd wi' lear, your rantin' High-Schule yard,  
The jibe, the lick, the roguish trick, the ghaists o' th' auld town  
guard.

"Fareweel, Edinburgh, your philosophic men,  
Your scribes that set you a' to richts and wield the golden pen,  
The Session-court, your thrang resort, big-wigs and lang gowns a';  
An' if ye dinna keep the peace, it's no for want o' law.

"Fareweel, Edinburgh, and a' your glittering wealth,  
Your Bernard's Well, your Calton Hill, where every breeze is  
health ;  
An', spite o' a' your fresh sea-gales, should ony chance to dee,  
It's no for want o' recipe, the doctor, or the fee.

"Fareweel, Edinburgh, your hospitals and ha's,  
The rich man's friend, the Cross long kenned, auld ports and city  
wa's,  
The kirks that grace their honoured place now peacefu' as they  
stand,  
Where'er they're found, on Scottish ground, the bulwarks o' the  
land.

- “ Fareweel, Edinburgh, your sons o’ genius fine,  
That send your name on wings o’ fame beyond the burning line—  
A name that’s stood maist since the flood, and just when it’s  
forgot  
Your bard will be forgotten too, your ain Sir Walter Scott.
- “ Fareweel, Edinburgh, and a’ your daughters fair,  
Your palice in the sheltered glen, your castle in the air,  
Your rocky brows, your grassy knowes, and eke your mountains  
bauld,  
Were I to tell your beauties a’, my tale would ne’er be tauld.
- “ Now fareweel, Edinburgh, where happy we hae been,  
Fareweel, Edinburgh, Caledonia’s queen ;  
Prosperity to Edinburgh wi’ every risin’ sun,  
And blessin’s be on Edinburgh till Time his race has run.”

Seven years of Lady Nairne’s widowhood at this period of life were spent in changing her residence from place to place, hoping against hope in the fruitless effort to retain her last earthly treasure. From Clifton she went to Ireland, the country of the lad’s father’s birth, which his mother, from old associations and dear regard for every thing that had concerned her husband, greatly wished to visit. In Ireland the Nairnes moved from Kingston to Enniskerry. A year or two later the mother and the son proceeded from Ireland

to the continent. They were accompanied by Lady Nairne's widowed and childless sister, Mrs. Keith, of Ravelston, and by a niece of the two sisters. The party travelled in turn through France [still homelike to them from many an exile's story], Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium, until they reached Brussels, where the end came. Lord Nairne had been attacked by influenza, which his weakened constitution was unable to resist. This rapidly developed chest complaint, and he died at Brussels in December, 1837, in his thirtieth year. He had given his mother the assurance which she most prized, that her hope was his hope, her Saviour his Saviour. The consolation was great; but the blow was desolating to the mourner in her seventy-second year. Relations and attendants wrote and spoke of her fortitude and resignation. It might be, however, that the checked and restrained feelings did not find fit relief. When Spring came, and the saddened travellers, leaving their charge in the churchyard at Brussels, went on without him to Munich, Salzburg, and Nice, there was no lightening of

her heavy heart. Lady Nairne could keep the anchor of her soul fixed sure and steadfast in a better world; but she had drifted away from faith in any good in this world. She expresses a forlorn, almost austere, indifference to the works of genius and the beauties of scenery, which she then saw and dwelt among for the first time. She could rejoice in her dead son's gain, and cling to her remaining friends, but her own words, written more than a year after her son's death, are—"I have not the smallest pleasure in scenery or anything external, but I know that all things are working together for good." Again, some months later, she declares—"What I have seen I could once have enjoyed thoroughly, but once is enough for this world, and it is time that enthusiasm about its enjoyments be over. To me they exist no longer, and I can give thanks that so it is."

Another view, more ascetic than Christian, though it is entertained by many Christians, was cherished by Lady Nairne, and was calculated to throw a gloomy chill over the very memories of her beloved dead. It is a view which

has its foundation in a forced and literal rendering, separately from the context, of one or two sentences of the Lord's, and is only consistently carried out in the monastic war with family ties. The argument is that God is jealous of the tender human affections He has given us, and strikes down their objects as being idols in the temples of our hearts. A strange interpretation this of the dealings of Him who gave back her son to the widow of Nain, and their brother to the sisters of Bethany. But, judging according to this interpretation, Lady Nairne decides, "For my own part my weaning has been such that I rejoice in the rapid lapse of days, months, and years even more than when, a too happy wife and mother, I eagerly wished the continuance of domestic happiness—a plain proof of the necessity of heavenly discipline, which has not been withheld." This creed is not rare; but it is the effect of the Bible read in the dim light of the cloister, rather than in the broad light of God's sun and the warm gleam of household hearths.

Working for charitable bazaars and devotional

reading were thenceforth Lady Nairne's chief employments. She continued abroad, at Pau and in Paris, for two or three years longer. While in Paris in 1842 she mentions, with some indignation, in a letter home, "A Scotch lady here, whom I never met, is so good as among perfect strangers to denounce me as the origin of the 'Land o' the Leal.' I cannot trace it, but very much dislike, as ever, any kind of publicity."

Nearly a year later Lady Nairne and her sister, Mrs. Keith, were still in Paris. The latter wrote home to try and "find out" in what quarter of Père-la-Chaise their dear brother Laurence had been buried twenty-four years before, and in what street he had died—a pathetic enough token that human affections vindicate their divine source, and will not be extinguished, though they may be crushed, by a morbid and false theory of the sin and the danger of their indulgence.

In 1843, when Lady Nairne was in her seventy-eighth year, this brother Laurence's son and heir affectionately urged his aunt to



return to the home of her youth at Gask. She had given him a half-jesting promise that she would come and spend the last of her days under his roof, so soon as he had provided it with a mistress. Lady Nairne had thought that her own health had been benefited by a milder climate; and, like Naomi, she had shrunk from returning

“With empty arms and treasure lost”

to her country, which she had left comparatively a rich woman. But she was also a brave woman; and the kindly entreaties of her nephew, who with his wife crossed the Channel to be her escort home, at last prevailed. The same year found Lady Nairne again at Gask, looking down once more on familiar woods and waters, and away to well-known moors and deer-forests. Everything, as she said, led her back to her earlier years; and what had passed between her first and last abode at Gask seemed like “a mixed and wonderful dream.” “Yet,” she added gratefully, “mercy and truth have followed me all the days



of my life." She liked to hear of the poor people whose grandfathers she remembered; and she took an interest in the divisions which preceded a great crisis in the Kirk of Scotland, identifying herself a good deal with the Free Kirk side of the question, though she lived and died a member of the Episcopal Church.

During the winter after her return to Scotland, she suffered from a stroke of palsy, which she bore with her accustomed firmness and calmness, emphatically setting forth her peace and joy in the prospect of death, and the simple grounds of her faith. She survived two years longer, much enduring and patient in her infirmities, the bitterness of bereavement and death alike being past. She was able to pay one visit to Edinburgh, when she went and saw those who survived of the ladies of the committee that had prepared the "Scottish Minstrel," her interest in Scottish song, it is said, having never failed. She devoted a portion of these last months to writing and receiving numerous letters with regard to the disposal of funds which her son's death had

placed in her hands. She laid out the money largely on such charities as met with her approval, making the single condition that the gifts should be administered anonymously. The Oliphants were always free givers. Carolina's grandfather, out of the precarious income that reached him in his exile, had sent home a liberal donation to his poor, whom he had helped unwittingly to ruin. His son, again, had forbidden *his* sons to touch the inheritance of their grandfather Strowan, reckoning that it would descend more honourably to the clan Donnochy or Robertson. Carolina was no unworthy daughter of the chivalrous "auld laird." A few months subsequent to her death, Dr. Chalmers, for whom she had much respect and admiration, was at liberty to announce that he had received from Lady Nairne, with strict injunctions to secrecy, the sum of £300 for his West Port scheme.

On the 25th of October, 1845, Lady Nairne was out in her garden-chair in the grounds of Gask; but on the following day there was an alarming change in her state of health. On

the 27th, speechless but still conscious, she listened with satisfaction to hymns and verses of Scripture which were read for her consolation and encouragement. On the same day she passed to her rest, aged seventy-nine years. She was buried in the grounds of Gask, on the site of what had been the old parish kirk, surrounded by the old kirkyard, and what is now an Episcopal chapel, founded by her nephew and herself. Her nephew lies beside her. Her native woods wave round her, the Earn "rows on" within sound, while within sight tower the Grampians.

Lady Nairne had consented that her songs should be published in a volume, without her name, but died during the preparation of the work. Her surviving sister and representative, Mrs. Keith, considering that death had removed the obstacle, put her sister's name to the volume, which was entitled "Lays of Strathearn."

Almost in spite of herself, Lady Nairne thus belongs to the world, in being identified with a people's songs. The high-born woman of the old *régime*, between whom and other men and

women there existed a lofty wall, is constrained to vindicate her jealously-guarded woman's nature, and show how true was her instinctive penetration, how intensely human her sympathies.

It has been already noticed that there is a resemblance between Lady Nairne's songs and those of Susanna Blamire. There is this difference, however, that while the latter is happier in graphically describing scenes with which she herself was intimately acquainted, Lady Nairne was more successful in idealising, at some distance, the gladness and the sadness of the masses, or of the typical representatives of parties and classes among her countrymen. The exceptions to this statement are to be found in those lively, loving songs which are said to have been prompted by Lady Nairne's wifely affection; and in the noble, thrilling protest, sent home from abroad, when the writer was in her seventy-sixth year, "Would you be Young again?" we have a brave Christian contradiction to the half pagan and wholly sensuous glorification of youth, which is the popular sentiment of such a

strain as Herrick's "Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may."

Both Lady Nairne and Susanna Blamire failed, naturally, in the artistic concentration and finish which Joanna Baillie could give to her songs. But while they were women far less broad in nature and culture, their songs have more personal humour or pathos, and more individual feeling. For that reason they frequently make a deeper impression.

Lady Nairne's songs extend over so wide a range that it is here impossible to analyse even the chief of them separately. She had a practice of taking well-known names and airs the sentiments of whose words offended her, or with respect to which it merely struck her fancy to supply them with fresh words or a fresh turn to former words. She dealt thus not only with names and airs of remote origin the words to which, saving for their antiquarian interest, had no charm; but also with more modern ones, some of Burns's among them. There can be no doubt that this unceremonious practice, confusing the public as to the identity of songs which

were already well-known, greatly aided Lady Nairne in mystifying her generation and preserving her concealment.

Dr. Rogers, the editor of the lately published life of Lady Nairne, has with great zeal and diligence collected and assigned to her many sets of Scottish songs which were not previously recognised as her work. The present writers remember to have heard these very generally sung without the singers having the least idea of their author. At the same time the adaptation of fragments of old ballads (as in "Huntingtower" and "The Lass o' Gowrie"), and of more modern songs (as in "Auld lang syne" and "Gude nicht, and joy be wi' you a'") has rendered it difficult to apportion Lady Nairne's share of merit (certainly a great one) in the case of many songs. There are songs which, from the name and theme downwards, are Lady Nairne's own. Such is "The Land o' the Leal," which is almost perfection. It was written originally with "John" instead of "Jean" as the name of the person apostrophised; and the verse beginning:—



“Sae dear that joy was bought, John,”

was added years afterwards owing to the religious convictions of the author. Such also are six beautiful songs dealing more or less with inanimate nature and the animal world, as well as with human life;—these are “The Auld House,” “The Rowan Tree,” “Bonnie ran the Burnie down,” “The Mitherless Lam-mie,” “The Robin’s Nest,” and “Caller Herrin’,” the tune of which last represented the chime of the bells of the High Kirk of Edinburgh.

The Jacobite songs of Carolina Oliphant are likewise all but entirely her own. Some of these have exquisite pathos; witness the verses of “Will ye no come back again?”—

“Bonnie Charlie’s now awa’,  
Safely owre the friendly main;  
Mony a heart will break in twa  
Should he ne’er come back again.

Will ye no come back again?  
Will ye no come back again?  
Better lo’ed ye canna be,  
Will ye no come back again?

\* \* \* \*



“ We watched thee in the gloamin’ hour,  
We watched thee in the mornin’ grey,  
Tho’ thirty thousand pounds they’d gie,  
Oh ! there was nane that wad betray.

“ Sweet’s the laverock’s note and lang,  
Lilting wildly up the glen ;  
But aye to me he sings ae sang,  
Will ye no come back again ? ”

The same may be said of the verses of “ Charlie is my Darling : ” —

“ They’ve left their bonnie Hieland hills,  
Their wives and bairnies dear,  
To draw the sword for Scotland’s lord,  
The young Chevalier.

\* \* \* \*

“ They proudly wore the milkwhite rose  
For him they lo’ed sae dear ;  
An’ gave their sons to Charlie,  
The young Chevalier.

“ Oh ! there was mony a beatin’ heart,  
An’ mony a hope and fear,  
An there was mony a prayer put up  
For the young Chevalier.”

Truer fire can hardly burn in words than what is found in “ Wha’ll be King but Charlie ? ” and in the rampant triumph of “ The Hundred Pipers : ” —

“The Esk was swollen sae red and sae deep,  
But shouther to shouther the brave lads keep;  
Twa thousand swam ower to fell English ground,  
An’ danced themsel’s dry to the pibroch’s sound.  
Dumbfounder’d the English saw—they saw,  
Dumfounder’d they heard the blaw, the blaw!  
Dumfounder’d they a’ ran awa’, awa’,  
From the hundred pipers an’ a’, an’ a’.”

“Ye’ll mount, Gudeman” is more of a half humorous, half pathetic story sung in dialogue; and for the pathos see the gudewife’s womanly regret over the severity of her cure:—

“The wily wife fleech’d, and the laird didna see  
The smile on her cheek thro’ the tear in her e’e;  
Had I kent the gudeman wad hae had siccan pain,  
The kettle for me sud hae coupet its lane.”

Different fun altogether is the merry waggery in “The Laird o’ Cockpen” (the title borrowed), “John Tod,” “The Twa Doos,” “Katie Reid’s House” (still more of an adaptation), and in yet another adaptation, where sheer, exuberant nonsense prevails and tickles old and young alike, “Aiken Drum.”

Among the sweetest of Lady Nairne’s adaptations, and those which have the most of

the woman in them, are "The Bonnie Brier-Bush" and "We're a' Noddin'." In "The Bonnie Brier-Bush," with a curiously life-like archness and tremulousness, the lassie doubts:—

"But were they a' true that were far awa' ?  
Oh! were they a' true that were far awa' ?  
They drew up wi' glaikit Englishers at Carlisle ha',  
An' forgot auld frien's that were far awa'."

And stoutly and indignantly the laddie denies:—

"I ne'er lo'ed a dance but on Athole's green,  
I ne'er lo'ed a lassie but my dorty Jean;  
Sair, sair against my will did I bide sae lang awa',  
An' my heart was aye in Athole's green at Carlisle ha'."

Then there comes over the couple in their blissful preoccupation the sorrowful remembrance of a lost cause and a nation's misfortunes:—

"The brier-bush was bonnie ance in our kailyard;  
The brier-bush was bonnie ance in our kailyard;  
A blast blew ower the hill, that gae Athole's flowers a chill,  
And the bloom's blawn aff the bonnie bush in our k. d.

In "We're a' Noddin'" with what delicate

distinctness the ancient figure by the ingle-neuk is painted :—

“Grannie nods i’ the neuk and fends as she may,  
An’ brags that we’ll ne’er be what she’s been in her day,  
Wow ! but she was bonnie, and wow ! but she was braw ;  
An’ she had routh o’ wooers ance, I’s’e warrant, great and sma’.”

How fond is the concluding conviction :—

“The bear’s i’ the brier, and the hay’s i’ the stack,  
And a’ will be richt again gin Jamie were come back.”

The wisdom of the heart, which is conspicuous in Susanna Blamire’s songs, finds clear expression in two of Lady Nairne’s which are by no means her best artistically, but which breathe so happy a philosophy, so fine a moderation, that they deserve to live on the lips of her countrywomen. These are “The Bonniest Lass in a’ the Warld” and “Saw ye ne’er a Lanely Lassie?” In the last Lady Nairne uses a very happy figure for the truth which she intends to teach :—

“Ilka state it has its blessings,  
Peevish dinna pass them by,  
*But like choicest berries seek them,  
Tho’ amang the thorns they lie.”*

When later in life her mind had taken another bent, Lady Nairne's Jacobite prepossessions did not prevent her from writing on the opposite side of religion and politics. So we have her "Covenanter's Widow's Lament," her "Pentland Hills," and, it may be, also her "The Women are a' gane Wud." Save, however, in the last instance, either early influences were too strong for her, or the poetic vein was well-nigh exhausted, since the two former songs do not rank high among her lyrics.

There only remains for us to characterise the aged bereft woman's "Would you be Young again?" Sufficient to say that that final song is brokenly, touchingly eloquent, and lit up with heavenly radiance, worthy of all the picturesque and human-hearted songs which preceded it.

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#### THE LAND O' THE LEAL.

I'm wearin' awa', John,  
Like snaw-wreaths in' thaw, John,  
I'm wearin' awa'  
To the land o' the leal.

There's nae sorrow there, John,  
There's neither could nor care, John,  
The day is aye fair  
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John,  
She was baith gude and fair, John,  
And, oh ! we grudged her sair  
To the land o' the leal.

But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,  
And joy is comin' fast, John,  
The joy that's aye to last  
In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear 's that joy was bought, John,  
Sae free the battle fought, John,  
That sinfu' man e'er brought  
To the land o' the leal.

Oh ! dry your glist'nin' e'e, John,  
My soul langs to be free, John,  
And angels beckon me  
To the land o' the leal.

Oh ! haud ye leal an' true, John,  
Your day it's wearin' thro', John,  
And I'll welcome you  
To the land o' the leal.

Now fare ye weel, my ain John,  
This world's cares are vain, John,  
We'll meet, and we'll be fain,  
In the land o' the leal.

### CALLER HERRIN'.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
They're bonnie fish and halesome farin' ;  
Wha'll buy my caller herrin'  
New drawn frae the Forth?

When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,  
Dreamed ye aught o' our puir fellows,  
Darkling as they faced the billows,  
A' to fill the woven willows ?  
Buy my caller herrin',  
New drawn frae the Forth.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
They're no brought here without brave darin' ;  
Buy my caller herrin',  
Haul'd thro' wind and rain.  
Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? &c.



Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
Oh, ye may ca' them vulgar farin' ;  
Wives and mithers, maist despairin',  
Ca' them lives o' men.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? &c.

When the creel o' herrin' passes,  
Ladies, clad in silks and laces,  
Gather in their braw pelisses,  
Cast their heads, and screw their faces.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? &c.

Caller herrin's no got lightlie,  
Ye can trip the spring fu' tightlie ;  
Spite o' tauntin', flauntin', flingin',  
Gow has set you a' a-singin'.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? &c.

Neebour wives, now tent my tellin',  
When the bonnie fish ye're sellin'  
At ae word be in yer dealin'—  
Truth will stand when a' thing's failin'.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ?

They're bonnie fish and halesome farin' ;

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'

New drawn frae the Forth ?

## THE LAIRD O' COCKPEN.

The Laird o' Cockpen, he's proud an' he's great,  
His mind is ta'en up wi' things o' the State ;  
He wanted a wife his braw house to keep,  
But favour wi' wooin' was fashious to seek.

Down by the dyke-side a lady did dwell,  
At his table-head he thought she'd look well—  
McClish's ae daughter o' Claverse-ha'-Lee,  
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was weel pouthered and as gude as new,  
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue,  
He put on a ring, a sword, and cock'd hat—  
And wha could refuse the laird wi' a' that?

He took the grey mare, and rade cannily,  
An' rapp'd at the gate o' Claverse-ha'-Lee :  
“ Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben,  
She's wanted to speak to the Laird o' Cockpen.”

Mistress Jean was makin' the elder-flower wine :  
“ An' what brings the laird at sic a like time ?”  
She put aff her apron, and on her silk gown,  
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, an' gaed awa' down.

An' when she cam ben he bowed fu' low,  
An' what was his errand he soon let her know ;

Amazed was the laird when the lady said "Na,"  
And wi' a laigh curtsie she turned awa'.

Dumfounded was he, nae sigh did he gie,  
He mounted his mare, and rade cannily,  
An' aften he thought, as he gaed thro' the glen,  
She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen.

---

### THE AULD HOUSE.

Oh, the auld house, the auld house,  
What tho' the rooms were wee !  
Oh, kind hearts were dwelling there,  
And bairnies fu' o' glee.  
The wild rose and the jessamine  
Still hang upon the wa',  
How mony cherished memories  
Do they, sweet flowers, reca' !

Oh, the auld laird, the auld laird !  
Sae canty, kind, and crouse,  
How mony did he welcome to  
His ain wee dear auld house !

And the leddy too, sae genty,  
There sheltered Scotland's heir,  
And clipt a lock wi' her ain hand  
Frac his lang yellow hair.

The mavis still doth sweetly sing,  
The blue-bells sweetly blaw,  
The bonny Earn's clear winding still,  
But the auld house is awa'.  
The auld house, the auld house,  
Deserted tho' ye be,  
There ne'er can be a new house  
Will seem sae fair to me.

Still flourishing the auld pear-tree  
The bairnies liked to see,  
And oh, how often did they speir  
When ripe they a' wad be!  
The voices sweet, the wee bit feet  
Aye rinnin' here and there,  
The merry shout—oh! whiles we greet  
To think we'll hear nae mair!

For they are a' wide scattered now,  
Some to the Indies gane,  
And ane, alas! to her lang hame;  
Not here we'll meet again.

The kirkyaird, the kirkyaird !  
Wi' flowers o' every hue,  
Sheltered by the holly's shade  
An' the dark sombre yew.

The setting sun, the setting sun,  
How glorious it gaed doon !  
The cloudy splendour raised our hearts  
To cloudless skies aboon !  
The auld dial, the auld dial !  
It tauld how time did pass ;  
The wintry winds hae dung it doon,  
Now hid 'mang weeds and grass.

---

### THE MITHERLESS LAMMIE.

The mitherless lammie ne'er missed its ain mammie.  
We tentit it kindly by nicht and by day ;  
The bairnies made game o't, it had a blythe hame o't,  
Its food was the gowan, wi' dew-drops o' May.  
Without tie or fetter, it couldna been better,  
But it wad gae witless the wide warld to see ;  
The foe that it feared not, it saw not, it heard not,  
Was watching its wanderings frae Bonnington Lea.

Oh what then befel it, 'twere waefu' to tell it,  
    'Tod Lowrie kens best, wi' his lang head sae sly ;  
He met the pet lammie, that wanted its mammie,  
    And left its kind hame the wide world to try.  
We missed it at day dawin', we missed it at night fa'in,  
    Its wee shed is tenantless under the tree ;  
Ae nicht i' the gloamin', it wad gae a roamin',  
    'Twill frolic nae mair upon Bonnington Lea.

### KIND ROBIN LO'ES ME.

Robin is my ain gudeman,  
Now match him, carlins, gin ye can,  
For ilk ane whitest thinks her swan,  
    But kind Robin lo'es me.  
To mak my boast I'll e'en be bauld,  
For Robin lo'ed me young and auld,  
In simmer's heat and winter's cauld,  
    My kind Robin lo'es me.

Robin he comes hame at e'en  
Wi' pleasure glancin' in his een ;  
He tells me a' he's heard and seen,  
    And syne how he lo'es me.

There's some hae land and some hae gowd,  
And mair wad hae them gin they could,  
But a' I wish o' warld's gude  
Is Robin aye to lo'e me.

---

### THE ROWAN TREE.

Oh, Rowan tree ! oh, Rowan tree ! thou'lt aye be dear  
to me,  
Entwined thou art wi' mony ties o' hame and infancy ;  
Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring, thy flowers the  
simmer's pride ;  
There wasna sic a bonny tree in a' the country side.  
Oh ! Rowan tree.

How fair wert thou in simmer time, wi' a' thy clusters  
white,  
How rich and gay thy autumn dress, wi' berries red and  
bright ;  
On thy fair stem were mony names, which now nae mair  
I see,  
But they're engraven on my heart—forgot they ne'er  
can be !

Oh ! Rowan tree.



We sat aneath thy spreading shade, the bairnies round  
thee ran,

They pu'd thy bonny berries red, and necklaces they  
strang ;

My mother ! oh ! I see her still, she smiled our sports to see,  
Wi' little Jeanie on her lap, an' Jamie at her knee !

Oh ! Rowan tree.

Oh ! there arose my father's prayer, in holy evening's  
calm,

How sweet was then my mother's voice in the Martyrs'  
psalm ;

Now a' are gane ! we meet nae mair aneath the Rowan  
tree,

But hallowed thoughts around thee twine o' hame and  
infancy.

Oh ! Rowan tree.

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### AIKIN DRUM.

There lived a man in our town,

In our town, in our town,

There lived a man in our town

And they ca'd him Aikin Drum.

And he wad be a soger, a soger, a soger,

And he wad be a soger,

And they ca'd him Aikin Drum.

And his coat was o' the gude saut meat,  
The gude saut meat, the gude saut meat,  
And a waistcoat o' the haggis-bag

Aye wore Aikin Drum.

O' the gude lang kail and the Athole brose,  
Aye they made his trews and hose ;  
And he luiKET weel, as ye may suppose,  
And his name was Aikin Drum.

And his bonnet was made o' pie crust,  
O' pie crust, o' pie crust,  
And his bonnet was made o' pie crust,  
Built baith thick an' soun'.

And he played upon a razor,  
A razor, a razor,  
And he played upon a razor,  
And whiles upon the kame.

And he lo'ed weel the crappit heads,  
The crappit heads, and singet heads,  
And he lo'ed weel the crappit heads  
And singet heads an' a';  
And he lo'ed weel the ait cake,  
The ait cake, the ait cake,  
And he lo'ed weel the ait cake,  
And scones and bannocks a'.

But wae's me ! he turned soger,  
A soger, a soger,  
But wae's me ! he turned soger,  
And he was marched awa'.  
'Bout him the carles were gabbin',  
For him the laddies sabbin',  
And a' the lassies greetin',  
For Aikin Drum's awa'.

---

### WHALL BE KING BUT CHARLIE?

The news frae Moidart cam' yestreen  
Will soon gar mony ferlie :  
For ships o' war hae just come in  
And landit Royal Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Ye're a' the welcomer early ;  
Around him cling wi' a' your kin :  
For wha'll be king but Charlie ?  
Come thro' the heather, around him gather,  
Come Ronald, come Donald, come a' thegither,  
And crown your rightfu', lawfu' king !  
For wha'll be king but Charlie ?

The Hieland clans, wi' sword in hand,  
Frae John o' Groat's to Airlie,  
Hae to a man declared to stand  
Or fa' wi' Royal Charlie.  
Come thro' the heather, &c.

The Lowlands a', baith great an' sma',  
Wi' mony a lord and laird, hae  
Declared for Scotia's king an' law,  
An' speir ye wha but Charlie.  
Come thro' the heather, &c.

There's ne'er a lass in a' the lan'  
But vows baith late an' early,  
She'll ne'er to man gie heart nor han'  
Wha wadna fecht for Charlie.  
Come thro' the heather, &c.

Then here's a health to Charlie's cause,  
And be't complete an' early ;  
His very name our heart's blood warms ;  
To arms for Royal Charlie !  
Come thro' the heather, &c.

---

## CHARLIE IS MY DARLING.

'Twas on a Monday morning  
Right early in the year,  
When Charlie came to our town,  
The Young Chevalier.  
Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
My darling, my darling,  
Oh, Charlie is my darling,  
The Young Chevalier.

As he cam' marching up the street,  
The pipes played loud and clear,  
And a' the folk cam' runnin' out  
To meet the Chevalier.  
Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

Wi' Hieland bonnets on their heads,  
And claymores bright and clear;  
They cam' to fight for Scotland's right,  
And the Young Chevalier.  
Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

They've left their bonnie Hieland hills,  
Their wives and bairnies dear,  
To draw the sword for Scotland's lord,  
The Young Chevalier.  
Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

Oh, there were mony beatin' hearts,  
And mony a hope and fear ;  
And mony were the prayers put up  
For the Young Chevalier.  
Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

---

### HE'S OWER THE HILLS THAT I LO'E WEEL.

He's ower the hills that I lo'e weel,  
He's ower the hills we daurna name ;  
He's ower the hills ayont Dumblane,  
Wha soon will get his welcome hame.  
He's ower the hills, &c.

My father's gane to fecht for him,  
My brithers winna bide at hame ;  
My mither greets and prays for them,  
And 'deed she thinks they're no to blame.  
He's ower the hills, &c.

The Whigs may scoff, the Whigs may jeer,  
But ah ! that love maun be sincere  
Which still keeps true whate'er betide,  
An' for his sake leaves a' beside.  
He's ower the hills, &c.

His right these hills, his right these plains ;  
O'er Highland hearts secure he reigns ;  
What lads e'er did our lads will do ;  
Were I a laddie, I'd follow him too.

He's ower the hills, &c.

Sae noble a look, sae princely an air,  
Sae gallant an' bold, sae young an' sae fair ;  
Oh ! did ye but see him, ye'd do as we've done ;  
Hear him but ance, to his standard ye'll run.

He's ower the hills, &c.

---

JOHN TOD.

He's a terrible man, John Tod, John Tod,  
He's a terrible man, John Tod.  
He scolds in the house, he scolds at the door,  
He scolds on the verra high road, John Tod,  
He scolds on the verra high road.

The weans a' fear John Tod, John Tod,  
The weans a' fear John Tod ;  
When he's passing by, the mithers will cry,  
" Here's an ill wean, John Tod, John Tod,  
Here's an ill wean, John Tod."



The callants a' fear John Tod, John Tod,

The callants a' fear John Tod.

If they steal but a neep, the laddie he'll whip,

And it's unco weel done o' John Tod, John Tod,

It's unco' weel done o' John Tod.

An' saw ye na wee John Tod, John Tod,

O saw ye na wee John Tod ;

His bannet was blue, his shoon maistly new.

And weel does he keep the kirk road, John Tod,

O weel does he keep the kirk road.

How is he fendin', John Tod, John Tod ?

How is he wendin', John Tod ?

He's scourin' the land wi' his rung in his hand,

And the French wadna frighten John Tod, John

Tod,

And the French wadna frighten John Tod.

Ye're sun-brunt and battered, John Tod, John Tod,

Ye're tautit and tattered, John Tod ;

Wi' your auld strippit coul, ye luik maist like a fule,

But there's nouse i' the lining, John Tod, John Tod,

But there's nouse i' the lining, John Tod.

He's weel respeckit, John Tod, John Tod,

He's weel respeckit, John Tod ;

He's a terrible man, but we'd a' gae wrang  
If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod, John Tod,  
If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod.

---

### REST IS NOT HERE.

What's this vain world to me ?—

Rest is not here ;

False are the smiles I see,

The mirth I hear.

Where is youth's joyful gleam ?

Where all now dear to me ?

Gone as the shadows flee—

Rest is not here.

Why did the morning shine

Ethereally and fair ?

Why did those thro's so fine

Vanish in air ?

Does not the vision say,

Faint, lingering heart, away ;

Why in this desert stay ?

Dark land of care !

Where souls angelic soar,  
Thither repair ;  
Let this vain world no more  
Lull and ensnare.  
That heaven I love so well,  
Still in my heart shall dwell ;\*  
All things around me tell  
Rest is found there.

---

### WOULD YOU BE YOUNG AGAIN?

Would you be young again ?  
So would not I ;  
One tear to memory given,  
Onward I'd hie.  
Life's dark flood forded o'er,  
All but at rest on shore,  
Say, would you plunge once more,  
With home so nigh ?

If you might, would you now  
Retrace your way ?  
Wander through thorny wilds,  
Faint and astray ?

\* Compare last verse of "Robin Adair."

Night's gloomy watches fled,  
Morning all beaming red,  
Hope's smiles around us shed,  
Heavenward—away.

Where are they gone, of yore  
My best delight?  
Dear and more dear, tho' now  
Hidden from sight.  
Where they rejoice to be,  
There is the land for me;  
Fly, time ! fly speedily ;  
Come, life and light.

## JOANNA BAILLIE.

1762—1851.

IN the autumn of 1762 a Scotch minister's family made a quiet "flitting" from the parish of Shotts to the neighbouring parish of Bothwell, in Lanarkshire. Besides the minister's books and his lady's work-table, there was a cradle, which had been already thrice filled; and immediately on the family's arrival in the cold quarters of a new home, it was prematurely replenished by a delicate baby girl, whose twin sister died at her birth. That tiny half-blighted bud of a child, named after her uncle, Dr. John Hunter, the great anatomist, developed into an ardent, aspiring, largely endowed Scotchwoman. She was the most sensible of wilful geniuses; the most retiring of

"wise" women; the most maidenly of experienced elderly ladies; the most tenderly attached of daughters and sisters; one of the meekest and most modest of Christians. Joanna Baillie's was a noble soul. She had a great man's grand guilelessness, rather than a woman's minute and subtle powers of sympathy; a man's shy but unstinted kindness and forbearance rather than a woman's eager but measured cordiality and softness; a man's modesty in full combination with a woman's delicacy; and, as if to prove her sex beyond mistake, she had, after all, more than the usual share of a woman's tenacity and headstrongness, when the fit was upon her. It is not so much with Joanna Baillie, the well-known author of the "Plays of the Passions," that we have to do here, as with Joanna Baillie, the singer of "Wood and Married and a'" and "'Saw ye Johnnie comin,' quo she?"—the Joanna Baillie who, quitting Scotland a girl, and not returning till she was a middle-aged woman, grown famous in the interval, came back speaking broader Scotch than when she left.

Another explanation may be needed. Unless destroyed for special reasons, there must exist ample materials for a full and interesting life of one of the first and best of English literary women ; but, as these materials have not been given to the world, a sketch of Joanna Baillie is all that can be drawn here. At least this sketch will not be slighter than many of the previous sketches, which have been made from formal narratives and meagre traditions.

Joanna Baillie's father and mother had both good Scotch blood in their veins. He was come of Baillies "sib" to the Baillies of Lamington and Jerviswoode. She was a Hunter of Hunters-ton. He was a learned and laborious man. She was a daughter in an original and clever family, and had herself such an appreciation of what was original in human nature, as to render her a good teller of a story. Both father and mother, too, were rarely high-principled ; and, in spite of his warm affections and her latent faculties of humour and pathos, they were alike strongly tinged with the strict, somewhat stern, reserve of the old Scotch character.



Agnes Baillie (Joanna's sister) told Lucy Aikin that, though her father had sucked the poison from a bite which she had received from a dog believed to be mad, he had never kissed her in his life. Joanna herself spoke to the same friend of her unsatisfied yearning for caresses when a child, and of her mother's simply chiding her when she ventured to clasp that mother's knees; "but," Joanna added, with perfect comprehension, "I know she liked it."

And Joanna had playmates, while the austere and hardy life at the manse of Bothwell was suffered to include much out-of-door freedom and active sport. Her sister Agnes's tender but much less powerful fancy, in its early fondness for stories of every description, stimulated Joanna to surmount the first Hill Difficulty of her letters; and her brother Matthew, most upright, skilful, and kindly of physicians, as well as most trusty and faithful of kinsmen, was the comrade of Joanna's youth, before he followed in the steps of his uncles, the great anatomists, and lived to be the fashion-

able and court doctor of the West-end of London.

The village of Bothwell, where Dr. James Baillie's kirk and manse were situated, possessed many advantages. It was where "Clyde's banks are bonnie," in the fruit lands of the middle ward of Lanarkshire, and where there is a strath of waving verdure at all seasons. In May and June it is one great white and pink flush of orchard blossoms. In August and September boughs bend richly under purple plums, scarlet streaked apples, and mottled olive and russet pears. Close by are the fragments of the great castle-keep of the Douglasses, one of the most stately ruins of Scotland. In the kirk of Bothwell, where Joanna's father preached, the grim Earl of Angus's hard-featured, sour-spirited daughter, Marjory Douglas, was wedded on an "ill-day" to poor wild David of Rothesay, already troth-plighted to Elizabeth Dunbar. At a mile's distance from Bothwell village stands Bothwell Brig, where, on another and still more memorable day, Monmouth, Dalzell, and Claverse broke and scattered the Cove-

nanters, who, driven to desperation by the persecutions after the murder of Archbishop Sharpe, had made head at Drumclog. All around, among waving trees or out on moors, are Bothwell Haugh, the Cartlane Crag, the Bog of Biggar, Loudon, Tinto.

The Baillies were not likely to take less interest in some of these localities than, through their ancestors of Lamington, they claimed descent from the only daughter of Wallace; while with their ancient kinsmen of Jerviswoode they had been in the thick of the troubles of the Kirk. But other legends, besides those of tolerably well authenticated history, lurked in each drearier spot of that country. Vague tales of the foul fiend himself started up in the desolation of a peat bog, or the horror of a gruesome cavern. The familiar spirit of Michael Scott was said to have come face to face with the frenzied Covenanters, — the warlock cleaving the defile of the Sandy Hill Nick, and throwing down the stones of the Yelgin Craigs. Or more awful still, there were legends of grey "bogles" and sheeted ghosts haunting the

cairns of murdered men, women, and bairns, down among the dark shores of Blantyre, or in the middle of the waste of "the long whang" of Carnwath Muir. These were the common chronicles and fire-side lore of the country people of the day. As a stirring, inquisitive child, Joanna Baillie had a good source from which she could derive such knowledge, and form a familiar acquaintance betimes with many-sided humanity. The kitchen of the country manse was then the free resort and resting-place of privileged beggars, old soldiers and sailors, and humble travellers of every description. The settle in the chimney, and the "bink" in the "hallan," were rarely empty, as backwards and forwards trotted the little maid herself, making believe to dispense the doles of bannocks and cheese, and the cogs of brose and kale. All the while she was gathering scraps of racy conversation into wide-open little pitchers of ears, and photographing still more accurately in clear fresh mirrors of eyes the quaintly-expressive faces and figures.

In remote years Joanna painted a very pleasant picture of her own and her sister's childhood at Bothwell :—

“ Two tiny imps, who scarcely stooped to gather  
The slender hare-bell or the purple heather,  
No taller than the foxglove's spiky stem,  
That dew of morning studd with silvery gem.  
Then every butterfly that crossed our view  
With joyful shout was greeted as it flew ;  
And moth, and ladybird, and beetle bright  
In shiny gold were each a wondrous sight.  
Then as we paddled bare-foot, side by side,  
Among the sunny shallows of the Clyde,  
Minnows and spotted pike with twinkling fin,  
Swimming in many rings the pool within,  
A thrill of gladness through our bosoms sent,  
Seen in the power of early wonderment.”

All that Joanna learnt directly at Bothwell was in early childhood. She was not more than six years old when her father exchanged the kirk of Bothwell for that of Hamilton, likewise in the fruit lands. But Hamilton was a town of six thousand inhabitants, clustering round the ducal palace and park of the Hamiltons. Here Joanna found herself one of a community which numbered scores of young people

of her own age and degree. So well did she like it, that she was the leader in every romping game and frolic, — an adept at out-of-door sports, whether swinging, skipping, or climbing. She was celebrated for the fearlessness with which she ran along the parapets of bridges and on the tops of walls, and scampered heedlessly on any pony she could find. She had the misfortune to cause the fracture of her brother's arm, by inducing him to ride double with her on another horse than Pegasus. The horse, not approving of a pair of riders, threw the one who had the worse seat. "Look at Miss Jack!" a farmer once commented, lost in admiration of the girl's "noble horsemanship," as she proceeded in advance of the party which she accompanied on a country excursion; "she sits her horse as if it was a bit of herself."

Joanna Baillie was born a leader. She was physically very courageous; a fact which she probably owed in part to her peculiarly healthy training. She knew how priceless were the privileges she had enjoyed in this respect. In advanced life she loved to dwell on her early



unchecked rambles over heaths compared to which Hampstead was a common; on her endless "paidling" in innumerable burns, tributaries of the Clyde; and on the intimate terms on which these habits had put her with great Nature. She was wont to regret wistfully that she could no longer "pad" barefooted on the grass or "plowter" in the water. And she would eagerly recommend to dainty and horrified English matrons the entire wholesomeness and happiness of letting their petted children run barefooted in summer.

Whatever more valuable acquisitions Joanna made in these young days, she was singularly deficient in learning—as the term is generally understood. Little Fanny Burney was erudite compared to Joanna Baillie, notwithstanding that Fanny declined dull printed books, and preferred to read on the animated tables of flesh which were presented to her in the faces of the clever men and women thronging her father's house. "At nine I could not read plainly," Joanna Baillie told



Lucy Aikin. "At nine, Joanna?" her sister Agnes called her back. "You could not read well at eleven."

The worthy minister took the stout little ignoramus in hand along with his breakfast. She spoilt the flavour of his trout and cake and black pudding by crying throughout each lesson. Yet, bookish as Dr. Baillie was, his own tastes did not blind him to Joanna's natural capabilities. Nay, paternal affection might help him to resist prejudice. Did not the natural history of the fruit lands remind him that the choice standard trees were those of slow, gradual growth? Certainly he signalised his penetration by maintaining Joanna's quickness and correctness of observation. "The child is not stupid in other things than books. Joanna will be 'the flower o' the flock' yet." "Honest Mat" got Latin to render into English verses at his school, and found himself unequal to the task. "Joanna will do it," said the father; and Joanna did it, and this was her first triumph in verse. And then her handiness with the needle (hear it all those who must needs believe

an authoress "handless") is said to have been remarkable.

However, it was thought that a change was called for, in order to conquer Joanna's repugnance to sedentary studies, and her passion for open-air pursuits and boyish pranks. At ten years of age she was accordingly sent, along with her elder sister, to Miss Macdonald's boarding-school, in the heart of the city of Glasgow. To be sure, boarding-schools at that time were more schools of manners than of intellectual knowledge. Among the few branches taught in them, the sewing of satin pieces and the art of sitting with straight backs took a prominent place. But there is this to be said. Elaborate embroidery on satin and the keeping of the restless young body under entire control, drew forth the primary elements of attention and application about as well as any other earnest effort.

Joanna learned to read perfectly at the Glasgow boarding-school, as doubtless she also learned more or less serviceable writing and arithmetic, and correct or incorrect notions in geography

and history. If she did not learn much else beyond singing a little to the guitar, and making a few promising attempts at drawing and dancing, still the school did its part.

But the study for which she showed a particular inclination was mathematics—a fact which is not only characteristic of the clear-headed girl, it is also evidence of the liberal possibilities of these decried old schools. Of her own free will and entirely unassisted, she mastered a considerable portion of Euclid. But Joanna was never what might be called a deeply-read woman. The friend of her middle age, Lucy Aikin—a fair classical scholar and an accomplished modern linguist—far exceeded Joanna in these respects. Yet, though Lucy Aikin joined to such acquirements fine penetration, good judgment, and correct taste, she stood as far behind Joanna Baillie in natural ability as Joanna surpassed her in learning, and Lucy Aikin herself would have been the first to admit it.

Pricked on by the demands, and the power of supplying the demands, of a large girl audience

at school, Joanna's hereditary gift of story-telling, by which she could excite laughter or tears, grew and grew until at length she found herself the chief figure in something like private theatricals. In connection with these chamber dramas Joanna was play-writer, playwright, player, stage-dresser, and scene-shifter in one. In this foreshadowing of her future career, she is said to have strongly displayed an eye for effect, which failed her in the great efforts of later life.

Let us conjure up, if we can, the old Glasgow boarding-school, with its small rooms and dim tallow candles. There stand the host of eager girls in their short-waisted, short-sleeved gowns and mittens, absorbed in the common levy of buckles, brooches, necklaces, plaids, scarfs, breast-knots, and the Highland bonnets which are still worn by girls. The acknowledged mistress of the ceremonies and games, and the "first lady" of the troop, is the undersized girl with marked features and grey eyes, who is to become the friend of Scott and Channing. Down on the scene Miss Macdonald and her governess look for a moment,

from the elevation of their huge toupees and barricades of ruffles. They dismiss authoritatively the excited rabble, and retire to their cosy supper, where they admit in confidence to each other the mother-wit of Miss Jack Baillie, who has yet got a bad memory for facts of consequence outside of her "fule" stories, and her "droll swatches" of this man and that woman.

Joanna Baillie returned to Hamilton with the dignity of a finished young lady; but she did not long remain one of the belles of the country town. She was not more than fifteen when her father was appointed to a professorship in Glasgow University. The Baillies removed to the city, and were established within the precincts of the College in the High Street. Glasgow was then in a transition state like other towns. The Virginian merchants, ruined by the American war, had first shown diminished heads and then as a class disappeared. A few of their descendants and a sprinkling of the local gentry still made head against new trades and new-comers, and continued to occupy houses in the Saltmarket and the Briggate, with

armorial bearings above the doors. The grand cathedral alone resisted all influences of time and men, whether dedicated to St. Mungo or to St. Mungo's Master, whether divided into the chancel, the crypt, and the dripping aisle, or into the High Kirk and the Laigh Kirk.

The learned atmosphere of the college had its influence on Joanna in spite of her old quarrels with learning. She was innocently proud to be a denizen of the city. The imposing stretch of civilisation expressed in the Trongate, with the sobering, elevating glory of the cathedral, were not without their effect upon her. It is possible that Miss Mally Campbell was another instrument in shaping Joanna's course. Miss Mally was not only one of the most intellectual women of her day, but she held as powerful sway over old Glasgow College society as Miss Jacky Murray, Lord Mansfield's sister, had previously maintained over the early Edinburgh assemblies. We are told that Joanna was considered a well-bred, clever girl for the period and the position—so much so as to “cast an awe” over her companions. Indeed, it is hard to



conceive Joanna as having ever been boisterous even in her childish escapades. In her simplicity she was one of the most perfect of gentlewomen, and one of the most maidenly of shrewd and honest-spoken women. Already she was fond of argument, and obstinate, if not unreasonable, when unconvinced.

If Joanna cherished dreams of living long years in Glasgow College, of seeing the ships advance higher and higher up the brimming Clyde, and of marrying at last some young professor bold enough to attempt clipping the wings already evincing a tendency to soar, all these fair prospects were suddenly brought to an end. Her father died in middle life, two years after his settlement in the University. She was then in her seventeenth year. In her extreme age, when addressing some lines to an infant James Baillie, she thus recalls his great-grandfather's worth:—

“Thou wear'st his name who, in his stinted span  
Of human life, a generous, useful man,  
Did well the pastor's honour'd task perform.  
The toilsome way, the winter's beating storm,



Ne'er kept him from the peasant's distant cot,  
Where want and suffering were the inmate's lot ;  
Who look'd for comfort in his friendly face,  
As by the sick-bed's side he took his place.  
A peace-maker in each divided home,  
To him all strife-perplexed folk would come.  
In after years, how earnestly he strove  
In sacred lore his students to improve ;  
As they met round the academic chair,  
Each felt a zealous friend address'd him there.  
He was thy grandsire's sire, who in his day,  
That, many years gone by, hath passed away,  
On human gratitude had many claims.  
Be thou as good a man, my little James."

Save for the widow's slender annuity, Dr. Baillie's family were dependent on Joanna's uncles. According to their arrangement, Mrs. Baillie at once left Glasgow, and went to Dr. William Hunter's small estate and house of Long Calderwood, in the Middle Ward of Lanarkshire. There she spent the first portion of her widowhood in great seclusion. Joanna might have gained some city tastes, but she certainly had not lost her country predilections. Recovering from the shock which had shaken the family and altered the tenor

of their life, she fell back on her old delight of long walks and scrambles by the river Calder. But the comparative loneliness of Long Calderwood, felt all the more now that the young people had enjoyed something of a more animated and exciting life, drove Joanna to books as a resource. Though she never became a great reader, she began to know almost by heart, Shakspeare and Milton, Dryden and Pope. Poetry, especially dramatic declamatory poetry, captivated her strong mind.

The brothers Hunter exercised a greater power over the fortunes of the Baillies than even rich uncles are in the habit of exercising. Dr. John Hunter was married, and had a family; but Dr. William, the elder brother, was a bachelor, and soon adopted Matthew Baillie as his successor. Dr. William Hunter accordingly sent Matthew to keep his terms at Balliol College, Oxford. The country house in the moors of Lanarkshire was thus rendered quieter and more monotonous still by the absence of the only son. The retirement pressed a little even on the much-enduring women, especially when

their season of mourning wore past. In the year 1783, when Joanna was twenty-one years of age, Mrs. Baillie and her daughters went to Glasgow, and spent the winter there; the young girls renewing their old acquaintanceships and friendships formed at Miss Macdonald's school.

At this time Joanna appeared to her companions a capable young woman, with much decision of character, like her mother. She was shy amongst strangers, but sufficiently frank to her friends; and in the midst of her seriousness, she was the merriest soul when the fit took her. She had quietly written some clever Scotch songs, most of them adaptations from old ditties. These were already sung with glee round many a rustic hearth, and at many a homely supper-table. They were such songs as would doubtless have preserved the whisper of the singer's name in the Middle Ward if she had become one of its douce and careful matrons, long after she was taken up with weightier duties, and tempted to disown such trifles.

Joanna was not handsome. In her graceful and kindly lines to her sister Agnes, on her birthday, Joanna reminds her sister of her early superiority in look and manner :—

“Thy fairer face and sprightlier courtesy  
(A truth that from my youthful vanity  
Lay not concealed) did for the sisters twain,  
Where'er we went, the greater favour gain.”

Joanna was below the middle height, and had the large, statuesque features which suit better with a stately figure. Years lent these features dignity rather than robbed them of grace. There is no word of her youthful bloom. She wore her hair for many years simply divided and braided across her forehead ; but the hair must have grown low on it from the first, and, whether in a crop, or in braids, must have nearly concealed the expansive brow, which thus lent no relief to the dark gauntness of the face. Her grey eyes were good and well opened, but grave, though humour could dance in them. The brows were firmly arched. Her mouth was wide, and expressed benevolence. Her chin was clearly moulded, and slightly projecting.

Joanna's was at this time a pent-up face, like the character of which it was the index.

The year 1784 saw another phase of the Baillies' history. Dr. William Hunter died, and left to his nephew, Matthew Baillie, the estate of Long Calderwood, as well as his house in London. He had added to his London house an anatomical theatre, lecture-room, and museum, but the valuable contents of the latter were to be transferred to Glasgow College at the end of thirty years. By the last bequest he disinherited his brother John, whose marriage had displeased him. Matthew Baillie was then a young man, unknown and untried, just entering on the struggle of his profession. His mother and sisters, to whom he was warmly attached, were not lavishly provided for, though not dependent upon him. He did not hesitate, however, but at once gave up the estate of Long Calderwood to Dr. John Hunter, who had been its presumptive heir, preferring to trust to his own ability and industry. Many men would call such a deed strained and far-fetched in a novel; but Matthew Baillie did it. Not only so.

He and his mother and sisters seem to have regarded it as the simplest act in the world—the only one, in fact, that was left him to do. In place of keeping Long Calderwood, and settling his mother and sisters in it, Matthew Baillie made over the house and property to his surviving uncle, and took his family up to London in that year, 1784, to share with him his fortunes in the middle of the wilderness of stone and lime of Windmill Street.

To these self-contained, gently-born Scotchwomen, accustomed to the fresh air of the country, the change was so great and so trying, as to prove an exile in which they were likely to feel lonelier and more isolated than they had ever felt among the moors of Lanarkshire. They had with them the affectionate son and brother, now risen to be the head of the house; but he was all day abroad, busy in the lecture-rooms, or the hospitals, or at the sick-beds of his first patients. Besides all this, he was unlike his family, tolerant as he might be of their prejudices. He had been in England from boyhood: his very dialect was softened. English



ways were natural to him, and he had formed many associations and ties which were strange to them.

It was a mercy that the house in Windmill Street was a large one, so that Joanna had ample opportunities for space and solitude. When her body was cramped with the confinement and with her avoidance of the crowded, glaring city streets, and when the weary longing for the wild braes of the Calder was upon her, she could retreat to unoccupied halls, as the anatomical theatre and museum might appear to her. She could find relief in promenading past skeletons and mummies, grinning and glowering at her in the twilight, and in gazing idly upon pictures of nature and portraits of great men; or in turning over cases of coins, of curious Indian workmanship, such as must have caught her lively fancy. Another resource for Joanna was that her uncle and name-father, Dr. John Hunter (alienation from whom was prevented by Matthew Baillie's prompt justice) had married a Scotchwoman, a sister of Sir Everard Home. Mrs. John Hunter was an elegant and accom-



polished woman, and was the centre of a polished and brilliant circle, in which the original genius of her husband shone like a rough diamond. She was the author of some lyrics, which were much admired by her own set in that day; and some of them, like the "Indian Chief's Death Song," may well be admired in any day. Her songs were contributed to "Scotch Miscellanies of Music," and one of them in particular was set to music by Haydn. This song, "My mother bids me bind my hair," has such a charm of simplicity,—highly artificial indeed, but the perfection of art personates artlessness,—and is so wedded to its exquisite air, that there is little chance of its being forgotten.

Joanna Baillie, though she far surpassed her aunt in breadth and depth of intellect, had yet a good deal in common with her, and could be improved by Mrs. Hunter's culture. At her house Joanna must have met society calculated to interest her and to excite her dormant powers. By some of the visitors there, Joanna was no doubt looked upon as a stiff, solemn Scotch girl, uncouth and raw-boned in mind, if *petite*

and slight in person, who, only through the good offices of her beautiful and tasteful aunt, was dressed in becoming clothing.

Whether it was the effect of

“The expressive glow of woman’s noon,”

or of the compulsory sedentariness of a city life, in the year 1790, when she was in her twenty-ninth year, Joanna composed and published (with genuine Scotch caution—*anonymously*) a volume of miscellaneous poems. The book made little impression, as might well be the case when it afforded so slight an indication of the genius of its writer. Joanna’s whole history is the very opposite of rank growth. It is rather the slow development and gradual ripening of strong, rich fibre. One generously discriminating critic who praised the faithful descriptions of nature in the book, comforted Joanna a little for the silence and indifference of the mass both of censors and readers. She was saved from the mortifying persuasion that she had utterly miscalculated what she could do.

One broodingly hot summer afternoon of this

year Joanna sat, in phlegmatic mood, sewing beside her mother in the "gloomy" house, apparently thinking of nothing except whether Matthew would come home to drink a cup of the tea which Agnes was infusing, or whether he would go round by the Denmans'—a house that had lately offered a potent attraction to him. But in reality Joanna's mind was dwelling on nothing so purely domestic. She was still smarting under her disappointment, and pondering the cause of her failure.

All at once there flashed upon her the idea that she had made a mistake, and that dramatic composition was the channel into which her genius should flow. Joanna Baillie was at once the least unwavering and the least rash of women. She went to her room that very afternoon, and projected a tragedy called *Arnold*. She worked at it unfalteringly for three months, and finished it; but it never saw the light. It was not till after eight years—those momentous eight years when many governments and many minds were heaving in the great moral and social earthquake—that

she published the first volume of the "Plays of the Passions." Neither within that period nor at any future time did she swerve from the faith which she had reached as at a bound, that her talent was not only dramatic, but that her conception of the drama was the true conception.

In the following year, 1791, the family home in Windmill Street was broken up by the marriage of Matthew Baillie to Sophia Denman, daughter of Dr. Denman and sister of the future Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench. The shady house in the dark street was left to the sunshine of young wedded love. Joanna gives an idealised portrait of her sister-in-law in birthday verses, addressed to Mrs. Baillie, in 1813:—

"A judgment clear, a pensive mind,  
With feelings tender and refined ;  
A generous heart in kindness glowing,  
An open hand, on all bestowing ;  
A temper sweet, and calm, and even,  
Through petty provocations given.  
A soul benign, whose cheerful leisure  
Considers still of others' pleasure ;  
Or in its lonely, graver mood,  
Considers still of others' good.

And joined to these, the vision'd eye  
And tuneful ear of poesy.  
Blest wight, in whom these gifts combine,  
Our dear Sophia, sister mine.

\* \* \* \*

Through years unmarked by woe or pain,  
Oft may this day return again ;  
Blessed by him whose rough career  
Of toil and care thy love doth cheer ;  
Whose manly worth by heaven was fated  
To be through life thus fitly mated."

It is the likeness of a gentle, delicate-minded lady, who was very happily circumstanced throughout her whole life—in her early nurture, in her husband, in her very sister-in-law, whose nature was so daring in its self-sufficing reticence and fearless firmness. For, though Joanna could be vehement, impatient, hard, and stubborn to characters in full contention with her, there were no limits to her forbearance and generosity in dealing with the pacific and the unpretending, not to say the weak. While she was far too guileless to object to independence of opinion or action, like a man she loved to protect, encourage, and guide; and it ought in fairness to be recorded that, like a man, she could also magnanimously forego her pledged

hostility and forget her registered resentment. Joanna's relations with her sister-in-law were, from first to last, very happy ones. Her affection for her brother's two children, and in the course of years for their children, was remarkable even in a woman who was naturally fond of both children and animals. Indeed, opposed as the description may be to the popular notion of a tragic muse, Joanna was, to abuse a systematically abused English word, always a very "comfortable" daughter, sister, aunt, and grand-aunt.

Mrs. Baillie and her daughters tried various situations before they fixed upon their dwelling-place—the dwelling-place that was to last to the daughter for well-nigh half a century. They removed to Colchester for several years; but the attraction of London was too strong for them. While the family were still flitting here and there, Joanna brought out in 1798, when in her thirty-seventh year, the first volume of her "Plays of the Passions." It contained *Basil*, a tragedy on love; a comedy on the same passion; and *De Mont-*



*fort*, a tragedy on hatred. Her theory included a high moral aim, the careful and finished delineation of character, and the growth and development of a master-passion with its inner spring and motive power.

She boldly and decidedly stated in her introduction that this theory was the higher utterance of the drama, though the neglected one; and, consistently with this opinion, she dogmatically undervalued circumstance and incident when used as opposing sources of interest.

This volume was also given to the world anonymously. In the life of Joanna Baillie, which is prefixed to the collected edition of her works, it is stated that "the author was sought for with avidity among the most gifted personages of the day." This gives the impression that the plays had created an immediate and unusual sensation. But according to Mary Berry's report very little account of the volume was made by her set the first winter, although she herself showed discrimination in readily appreciating the plays, and in crying them up everywhere. A copy had been sent to her



from the author [possibly at Mrs. John Hunter's suggestion], and Miss Berry could not conjecture who had paid her the compliment. In March, 1799, Mary writes of the author as still undiscovered, and as having "quietly waited a whole twelvemonth for the impression the volume had at last made on an obdurate public," after Sir George Beaumont and Fox were in raptures, and Mrs. Siddons was speaking of the plays with surprise and delight.

Whether the Strawberry-Hill coterie, whose head, Horace Walpole, had closed his long life the previous year, had accorded its favourable award or not, it is certain that so early as the month of September, 1798, Thomas Campbell, in the *New Monthly Magazine*, gave a very favourable review of the plays, attributing them, however, to a man. This review won for them the attention and the admiration of many equally competent judges. A friendship was soon afterwards formed between Campbell and Joanna Baillie, which lasted without interruption to the close of their lives. She formed

several similar friendships in the course of her life.

In the year 1799, a few days after she had written of the plays what has been quoted, Mary Berry announced that one of the tragedies was about to be acted. She refers to a rumour that the unknown author, on being applied to through Cadell, still “refuses to come forward even to receive emolument, and says the piece is before the public, and that the theatre may do what they please with it, only desiring that the simplicity of the plot may not be infringed upon. Neither fame nor a thousand pounds, therefore, have much effect on this said author’s mind, whoever he or she may be. I say *she*, because, and only because, no man could or *would* draw such noble and dignified representations of the female mind as Countess Albin and Jane de Montfort. They often make us clever, captivating, heroic, but never *rational*ly superior.”

The author’s refusing to come forward even to receive emolument, and her saying candidly that the piece was already before the public,

reads very like an act of the Baillies in general, and of Joanna in particular; but her authorised biographer has taken no note of the circumstance. It might have been her first impulse, put aside on further reflection. On the other hand, the writer of the brief summary of Joanna's life alludes to her invariable practice with regard to her literary profits. Unlike Zaccheus the publican in every other respect, she followed his rule with respect to the earnings of her pen—half of her goods she gave to feed the poor. This arrangement was made and adhered to, when the Baillies' income, never a very large one, was at its minimum; and it was not departed from when increased funds brought in their train increased expenditure and a host of additional wants. During the family's stay at Long Calderwood, Mrs. Baillie could not forget that she was a minister's widow, and that this gave her poorer neighbours a claim on her feeling heart, planning head, and helping hand. Swallowed up in the "no man's" crowd of London, the women of the family must have found themselves mazed and baffled in their charitable commission,

which they held both by their own choice and by inheritance: But still they were not women to neglect it, and Matthew Baillie's profession provided an opening for them. Later in life, when they were restored to something like the manageableness of a country district, deeds of charity became one great occupation of their united lives. Joanna describes Agnes as the almoner of the sisters :—

“ Take thy way,  
To gain, with hasty steps, some cottage door,  
On helpful errand to the neighbouring poor.”

By some peculiarities of expression in the plays it oozed out that the author was Scotch; and a few hasty guessers hazarded the name of Mr. Scott, author of *Glenfinlas* and *The Eve of St. John*, in connection with the dramas which were so largely engaging the literary world. The more penetrating critics decided that the author was a woman, and the tide of public opinion had already set in for Mrs. John Hunter, when the dedication of the second volume to Dr. Matthew Baillie pointed to him

and his family as having a peculiar interest in the author. The substitution of Mrs. Hunter for Joanna Baillie, like a gold bodkin for a steel dagger, sounds ludicrous to us; but the world did not know aunt and niece in their respective position to each other then. Lucy Aikin mentions that while the question was still pending, she met Joanna and Agnes Baillie making a morning call. (It is queer, after all, to hear of Joanna Baillie making a morning call in a pelisse, beaver-hat, and feather.) The call was at the house of Mrs. Barbauld, an excellent woman, who was raised to as unchallenged an eminence in the lettered circles of her own day, as she is in danger of being undervalued in another generation. The plays *par excellence* were, of course, brought into discussion by so fit a company, and the sister author of the "Evenings at Home" praised them with all her heart. But Joanna was not seduced into self-betrayal even by "the sudden delight" which Lucy Aikin believed such praise must have afforded her. Lucy goes on to tell, that "the faithful sister rushed forward, as we

afterwards recollected, to bear the brunt, while the unsuspected author lay snug in her taciturnity." But Joanna stood still more severe ordeals without losing her presence of mind, and that composure which was no more than decorum in her eyes.

Even when the curiosity of the refined Mrs. Grundy was satisfied with regard to the plays, which she had praised "hugely," she was reluctant to give all the credit to a middle-aged, middle-class, matter-of-fact woman, who had mixed little in society, and who knew practically nothing of the battle of life. Mrs. Grundy would still have it that "the introductory discourse," at least, was written by Joanna's exulting brother.

It was not till April, 1800, that the Scotch minister's daughter dared to come before the footlights, and ask an almost national—in some respects a more than national verdict, by having her play of *De Montfort* put on the great London stage of Drury Lane. Everything was done beforehand to ensure success. The scenery and decorations were to be appropriate and in the



best style; the principal characters were to be splendidly represented by John Kemble and Sarah Siddons.

The brother and the sister Kemble, indeed, had taken a fancy to the brother and the sister characters in the play, which are said to have been cast expressly for the Kembles, the author having had the two in her mind. Before the Baillies removed to London, Mrs. Siddons had entered on her triumphs, and had become so much the rage, that, as one of the Misses Elliot of Minto—the witty and winning nieces of Miss Jean Elliot—wrote to her brother Hugh at Copenhagen, people of rank went and dined at the piazzas in Covent Garden at three o'clock, in order to get places, and “all the gentlemen cry, and the ladies are in fits.” Thomas Campbell declared that Joanna Baillie had left “a perfect picture” of Mrs. Siddons in the description of Jane de Montfort:—

*Page.* Madam, there is a lady in your hall,  
Who begs to be admitted to your presence.

*Lady.* Is it not one of our invited friends?

*Page.* No, far unlike to them: it is a stranger.

*Lady.* How looks her countenance?



*Page.* So, queenly, so commanding, and so noble,  
I shrank at first in awe ; but when she smiled,  
For so she did to see me thus abash'd,  
Methought I could have compass'd sea and land  
To do her bidding.

*Lady.* Is she young or old ?

*Page.* Neither, if right I guess ; but she is fair ;  
For Time hath laid his hand so gently on her  
As he too had been awed.

*Lady.* The foolish stripling !  
She has bewitch'd thee. Is she large in stature ?

*Page.* So stately and so graceful is her form,  
I thought at first her stature was gigantic ;  
But on a near approach I found, in truth,  
She scarcely does surpass the middle size.

*Lady.* What is her garb ?

*Page.* I cannot well describe the fashion of it.  
She is not deck'd in any gallant trim,  
But seems to me clad in the usual weeds  
Of high habitual state ; for as she moves,  
Wide flows her robe in many a waving fold,  
As I have seen unfurled banners play  
With a soft breeze.

*Lady.* Thine eyes deceive thee, boy ;  
It is an apparition thou hast seen.

*Fuberg.* It is an apparition he has seen,  
Or it is Jane de Montfort.

One of the treats of the quiet household in  
Windmill Street must have been an occasional  
play.

The approbation of John Kemble and his sister was no slight flattery and no small promise of success. To add, if possible, to the actors' interest in the drama, a personal introduction was arranged. It seems that she who wove and they who wore the buskin in this instance took to each other heartily and stood by each other loyally. Either Mrs. Siddons had put off "the Catherine manner," as Mary Berry expressed her estimation of the great actress's high and uncertain humour in private company, or the "Catherine" tone had not jarred on Joanna as it did on the favourite of royal courts and salons. Joanna was herself a little formal in manner at first, in the same proportion that she was wonderfully simple and unexacting in character. Mrs. Siddons's speech to Joanna Baillie at the close of their first meeting, "Make me more Jane de Montforts," was still more gracious than her final condescension to Mary Berry and her friends, in singing to them in private and after supper.

Joanna, late in life, gave a more direct

expression of her deep admiration of Mrs. Siddons :—

“ The impassioned changes of thy beauteous face,  
Thy stately form and high, imperial grace ;  
Thine arms impetuous toss'd, thy robe's wide flow,  
And the dark tempest gathered on thy brow,  
What time thy flashing eye and lip of scorn  
Down to the dust thy mimic foes have borne ;  
Remorseful musings sunk to deep dejection,  
The fix'd and yearning looks of strong affection ;  
The active turmoil a wrought bosom rending,  
Where pity, love, and honour are contending ;—  
They, who beheld all this, right well I ween,  
A lovely, grand, and wondrous sight have seen.

\* \* \* \*

Thy graceful form still moves in nightly dreams,  
And what thou wast to the lull'd sleeper seems ;  
While feverish fancy oft doth fondly trace,  
Within her curtain'd couch thy wondrous face.  
Yea ; and to many a wight, bereft and lone,  
In musing hours, though all to thee unknown,  
Soothing his earthly course of good and ill,  
With all thy potent charm thou actest still.”

The prologue to *De Montfort* was written by the Hon. F. North, and the epilogue by the Duchess of Devonshire ; so that rank and fashion might have some crumb to boast of in the fare.

But there is none to tell us how Joanna felt and looked at this great crisis of her fame. Was the impenetrable mask of her calmness at last rudely disturbed? Had she the courage to be present in a private box, to sit out either the acclamations which should crown her with renown, or the derision which should cover her with something like disgrace? Or did she depute her almost equally interested brother to be present, to see and hear for her? Did she wait the fiat in his house, or did she sit at her own quiet fireside, not caring so very much to hide her trembling there, unless it were that her firmness might compose the agitation of Mrs. Baillie and Agnes? Could Joanna not quite shut out, by absence and closed eyelids, the sea of upturned faces in the pit? Did her precise woman's nose smart at the smell of the sawdust and the orange peel? Did she think of her countryman, James Thomson, and how the scales of fortune were reversed in his case by one unlucky line—

“O! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!”—

caught up by the terrible wags in the galleries, and parodied with the shout:—

“ O ! Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, O ! ”

Did she remember Oliver Goldsmith and his open tremors and quavers? Though we are sure that Joanna's mood bore no resemblance to that of the outrageous little Irishman, we should like to know what she thought at the moment the curtain was drawing up that night on “the large, old-fashioned chamber in Jordan's house,” with “Jerome entering, bearing a light, followed by Manuel and servants carrying luggage.”

Without question, Joanna's faith in her great and good aim of reforming the drama, as well as of exercising her gift, must have supported her. Without doubt, she was not unduly oppressed, any more than unduly elated; but she was a woman, after all, and her spirit must have been up in arms that night.

*De Montfort* was well received by a large and appreciative audience. But its radical defects as a stage-play prevented it, even in the powerful hands of the Kembles, from

holding its place for more than eleven nights. Thomas Campbell might well say that it abounded in beautiful passages; but all its noble feeling and fine eloquence could not compensate for its author's ignorance of stage effect. The principle which she had acted on, of making the interest to centre in the hearts and not in the circumstances of the *dramatis personæ*, was disastrous so far as the theatre was concerned. The rapid withdrawal of the piece was a disappointment to all concerned. But there were compensations to its author. Her work had met with general regard, and the more distinguished the critics, for the most part, the more weighty their approbation. *De Montfort* had not been written with a direct view to the stage. And if the stage were all what it was and wanted reformation, that desirable end was not to be accomplished by one play, or the bringing out of that play.

By the autumn of 1801, from the date of a note which has been preserved, Joanna and her mother and sister must have established themselves at Hampstead. For six or seven years

they were on Red Lion Hill. One does not need to say that Hampstead with its breezy heath was much more of a rural suburb than it is now. The district between it and London offered a tempting opportunity for highwaymen. Sir Walter Scott recounted, as a sharp test of his courage, on one occasion, the sudden starting up before him of a very suspicious figure, just when he had become conscious of the misfortune of having lost his way, and of being benighted in the labyrinth of lanes and fields about Hampstead.

To the country-bred women who had been for sixteen years pent up among stone and lime, the settling at Hampstead was like a return to all natural wholesome pleasure. Yet to natives of Clyde's and Calder's banks, who had looked up at Tinto and shivered before "the long whang" of Carnwath Muir, Highgate and the Heath could not but have been decidedly tame. The traditions of Harrow, which Byron had left only recently, and of Finchley with its Dick Turpin heroes in crape masks and boots and tights—unless, indeed, one went as far as Barnet and



the Middle Ages—shrank and paled before the legends of Drumclog Covenanters, and of brownies and bogles and fairies dancing on the Fairy Knowe. But Hampstead had one unapproachable advantage to a thoughtful spirit like Joanna's. She could receive inspiration from looking down on the outlines of the mass of buildings which betokened the presence of the great congregation of London, and from listening to its muffled myriad voices sounding faintly in the air. Joanna's eyes turned always and at all seasons towards London. Her gaze did not fix on the grass, the gorse, and the trees among which she often sauntered and sat, alone or in congenial companionship, for hours at a stretch; but turned continually towards the great city. She herself tells in her verse how her attention wandered away to—

“ Towers, belfries, lengthened streets, and structures fair.  
St. Paul's high dome amidst the vassal bands  
Of neighbouring spires, a regal chieftain stands;  
And over fields of ridgy roofs appear,  
With distance softly tinted, side by side,  
In kindred grace, like twain of sisters dear,  
The towers of Westminster, her abbey's pride.

\* \* \* \* \*

Viewed thus, a goodly sight ! but when surveyed  
 Through denser air, when moistened winds prevail,  
 In her grand panoply of smoke arrayed,  
 While clouds aloft in heavy volumes sail,  
 She is sublime—she seems a curtain'd doom  
 Connecting heaven and earth,—a threatening sign of doom.

\* \* \* \*

Through drizzly rain,  
 Cataracts of tawny sheen pour from the skies,  
 Of furnace smoke black curling volumes rise !  
 And many-tinted vapours slowly pass  
 O'er the wide draping of that pictured mass.

So shows by day this grand imperial town ;  
 And, when o'er all the night's black stole is thrown,  
 The distant traveller doth with wonder mark  
 Her luminous canopy athwart the dark,  
 Cast up from myriads of lamps, that shine  
 Along her streets in many a starry line,  
 He wondering looks from his yet distant road,  
 And thinks the Northern streamers are abroad.  
 ' What hollow sound is that ? ' Approaching near,  
 The roar of many wheels breaks on his ear ;  
 It is the flood of human life in motion !  
 It is the voice of a tempestuous ocean.  
 With sad but pleasing awe his soul is fill'd,—  
 Scarce heaves his breast, and all within is still'd,  
 As many thoughts and feelings cross his mind—  
 Thoughts mingled, melancholy, undefined,  
 Of restless, reckless man, and years gone by,  
 And Time fast wending to Eternity."

At Hampstead the Baillies found themselves

amongst a set of neighbours remarkable, like the Clapham circle, for their worth and benevolence. These neighbours and the Baillies took to each other very kindly. In addition, at Hampstead the Baillies were able to practise something of their old country hospitality to chance or wayfaring guests. Matthew would look in and get a bed for a night, on his way to a country patient, while Matthew's wife and little ones would come out for longer benefit from country quarters.

Joanna, the famous author, was also the energetic purveyor and arranger of family and neighbourly feasts. Stars from the great world were constantly appearing at the Baillies' table, attracted by the fame and the wit of Joanna—it may have been fascinated too by the graceful and curious information of Agnes Baillie, who was a remarkable and very attractive woman, a fit pendant to her sister.

Hampstead saw the beginning and the crowning completion of many peculiarly happy and sympathetic friendships in Joanna Baillie's history. Lucy Aikin came with her mother. After

leaving it for a time, when she was advanced in life she returned with a longing to die and be buried in the locality. Mr. Richardson (Sir Walter's "Johnnie Richardson") journeyed from Edinburgh, and pitched his tent at Hampstead. He soon formed one of the attractions that drew Sir Walter, the kindest and homeliest of great men, from the din and whirl of London to enjoy with his old friend and his new friend—the ex-lawyer and the poetess—their peaceful, Scotch-kept Sundays at Hampstead. Miss Noel (Milbanke), in the serene spring of her girlhood, and throughout the stormy summer of Lady Byron's matronhood, was Joanna Baillie's dear and highly-valued friend.

Before November, 1801, Joanna had made the acquaintance of Mary Berry, and had advanced so far towards intimacy with her, that she wrote the prologue and the epilogue for Mary's amateur play of *Fashionable Friends*. There can hardly be a doubt that Miss Baillie witnessed the private theatricals played by aristocratic performers at Strawberry Hill. It must have

seemed to her very like playing at work. And that fairy palace—half gem, half toy, so much more costly in many respects than another fairy palace which she was yet to inhabit with greater sympathy—wanted its high presiding genius before Joanna crossed its threshold. Probably it did not much matter, so far as she was concerned. To the exquisite critic, Horace Walpole, notwithstanding that he affected her graceful Aunt Hunter, Joanna at this date was likely to be as distasteful as Dr. Johnson had proved repulsive to the Horace Walpole of old.

One cannot help thinking that, with all Mary Berry's patronage and petting, Joanna was a little out of place in connection with such a game of a play. Certainly if she had not recognised the fact, she might have appeared once and again in such society; and, had she chosen to forsake old friends and to adapt herself to new associates, she would have been moulded and fused into the society, as one of the privileged *habituées* of its inner intellectual circle.

In 1802 Joanna Baillie published her second volume of "Plays of the Passions." It contained a comedy on hatred; *Ethwald*, a tragedy on ambition, in two parts; and a comedy on ambition. With mingled consistency and inconsistency, she followed the example of the Stuarts, and would not be taught by experience. In spite of her penetration and her power of painting human nature, she adhered rigidly to her plan of writing both a tragedy and a comedy on the growth of a single passion—with its working in the heart, spreading outwardly, and controlling circumstances, not being controlled by them. She continued to insist that the analysis of a passion in itself and in its results, ought to be the true source of the spectator's terror, pity, or mirth.

In July of the same year Mr. Jeffrey made his well-known attack on the plays in the *Edinburgh Review*. He handled them freely, and exposed their weak points with a criticism not only searching, but galling. He maintained that Joanna Baillie's theory, so far as it was original, was arbitrary and false, because of the



complex nature of man's moral constitution, and the powerful influence exerted upon it by fellow creatures and by contemporary events. He argued that there was no ground for a higher aim in the drama than the entertainment of the audience. For that end fortunes and misfortunes were as effectual as feelings and principles. He scouted the idea of men being induced to crush passion in the germ within their own breasts by watching its rise in the breasts of others. He pointed to the excesses of passion as being frequently the abuse of virtues which, in their germ, should be fostered in place of being crushed. Even if a play on a single passion were legitimate art, he alleged that the limits of one play were too narrow to show its development in a natural and convincing manner. At the same time he admitted Joanna Baillie's grasp of character and her painstaking work; but he accused her of making a raw-head and bloody-bones employment of slaughter, while she professed to despise scenic incident. He charged her, not simply with imitation of Shakspeare, but with direct pla-



g iarism from him, and with slavish borrowing and reproducing of his obsolete words and turns of speech.

Few people will endorse the whole of Jeffrey's criticism now. In after days he himself greatly qualified it. Its general justness as well as poignancy is, however, as plain now as then. The great ability of the reviewer, together with the tyrannous supremacy of censorship to which the *Edinburgh Review* had attained, made the hostile verdict formidable. Although Joanna allowed little sign to manifest itself, the criticism cut to the quick of her susceptibility to praise and blame. But Jeffrey's criticism could not conquer her any more than her gallant and obstinate resistance could disarm him.

During the year 1804 Joanna published her volume of "Miscellaneous Plays." Perhaps unconsciously she had been influenced by Jeffrey's critique to the extent of modifying her theory and of allowing the plays a freer construction; but she denied the fact stoutly in her preface. The concession, if such it could be called, was of small moment in softening Jeffrey's hostility.

In the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1805, he had another article on "Miss Baillie's 'Miscellaneous Plays.'" In this article he frankly admitted that "Miss Baillie cannot possibly write a tragedy, nor an act of a tragedy, without showing genius and exemplifying a more dramatic conception and expression than any of her modern competitors." He could not help quoting largely, with extorted commendation, from her beautiful and moving play of *Constantine Paleologus*, which was taking the rest of the world by storm. At the same time Jeffrey's strictures on the defects of the plays were, if possible, more severe than in the previous encounter, and his tone had acquired something of supercilious arrogance and positive animus.

But Joanna was not without a compensation. From the same year, 1804, she dated her meeting with another Scotchman, more purely a man of letters, who viewed her and her plays in a different spirit from that in which Jeffrey regarded them. Sir Walter Scott was up in London, and having a great sympathy with

his countrywoman, and a sincere admiration of her work, he got an introduction to her through their common friend Mr. Sotheby, the translator of "Oberon," whose acquaintance Sir Walter had made many years before, when Mr. Sotheby was an officer in a regiment stationed at Edinburgh. Joanna was fresh from Mr. Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," and very likely he was fresh from her *Constantine*.

Joanna may have felt a momentary disappointment in seeing a plain, somewhat heavy lawyer's face as the face of her poet; and it might also flash across his mind, that the kind, sensible, very original, but very lean little Scotchwoman who received him was not his ideal of the tragic muse. But their intercourse was thenceforth honourable alike to their heads and hearts, and was brotherly and sisterly.

In 1806, when Joanna was forty-four years of age, she and Agnes had the grief of parting from their mother. Mrs. Baillie had attained a ripe age, and had been for some time declining in health. She had been stone-blind for years, and was latterly paralytic. The sisters watched

her by day and by night. Joanna, who was the great nurse of the household, and had the distinct qualification that she did not suffer from loss of sleep, took the heaviest share of nursing. There was much to soften the blow, but to the clinging household of women it was a blow still. When, more than ten years after, Joanna wrote to Mary Berry the letter in which she condoles with her on the death of her father, there is a lingering remembrance of that parting.

With their mission for the time gone, and the ache of a void at their hearth, the sisters resolved to revisit Scotland, which they had quitted twenty-one years before. They spent some months there in the years 1807—8. They went directly to their native place, to rest among their old friends of the fruit lands and of Glasgow. They scrambled on Clyde's banks, and paced the Trongate once more. To the friends whom they had left behind them, these middle-aged women came back with all the prestige which Joanna had won for them. If she had been found capable of inspiring awe when she was but a girl of fifteen in her father's

old college days, it could hardly be doubted that she would now be an alarming Joanna Baillie to the foolish and frivolous of all ages. It was so to a certain extent, though it was a case of consciences taking guilt to themselves. It is Lucy Aikin's volunteered testimony that Joanna was only too tolerant of impertinence. Old friends were inclined for a moment to protest that the lively, warm-hearted girl on whom years and fame had fallen, reappeared a proud, cold woman. But the protest was only entered when the friends could not make sufficient allowance for certain difficulties of Joanna's position,—for the effects of time and trial, and for the elements of sadness in a first return to the scenes of youth after a long absence. The same friends soon remarked with astonishment that the London Miss Baillies—Joanna quite as much as Agnes—came back speaking broader Scotch and making use of more Scotch phrases than when they went away. Without fail, these jealous friends were not long of comprehending and congratulating themselves on the discovery that, when she was alone with them, Joanna

was the very same unaffected and reliable friend she had ever been ; and that she had a particular delight in reverting to old stories and old adventures.

Joanna's temporary residence in Glasgow was marked by a kind, womanly exercise of her leisure, taste, and influence. Hearing that a visit from her would be very welcome, she went and saw Struthers, the shoemaker poet. She looked over and expressed cordial admiration for his MS. poem of the "Poor Man's Sabbath." By her instrumentality and that of Sir Walter Scott, whom she enlisted in his cause, she induced Mr. Constable to publish the poem ; and, though its success was very partial, and the money which it brought its author not above thirty or forty pounds, she did what she could to make public his talents and merits,—an act which was in the end profitable to Struthers. In this manner she certainly gladdened the heart of a gifted and worthy man.

Another publication of this year, in which Joanna had the greatest interest, was Sir Walter's "Marmion." She was imparting her



delight in the perusal of the book by reading it aloud for the first time in a circle of friends, when she was startled by coming to the following passage:—

. . . . “the wild harp that silent hung  
By silver Avon’s holy shore  
’Till twice an hundred years rolled o’er.  
When she the bold enchantress came,  
With fearless hand and heart in flame,  
From the pale willow snatched the treasure,  
And swept it with a kindred measure ;  
Till Avon’s swans, while rung the grove  
With Montfort’s hate and Basil’s love,  
Awakening at the inspirèd strain,  
Deemed their own Shakspeare lived again.”

Thrilled to her heart’s heart by this tribute of praise from a source which she prized above all others, the indomitable, great little woman read the passage to the end without pause or faltering, and only displayed a want of self-command when the emotion of a friend who was present (her attached sister Agnes?) became uncontrollable.

Joanna and her sister left Glasgow to make a tour in the West Highlands, which they had



not visited before. Brought face to face with the sublime features of nature which she loved so well, she relaxed her guard on the expression of her feelings, and indulged in greater self-abandonment than she had ever allowed herself to indulge in before. She was so overcome as to shed tears as she gazed on the Falls of Moness. She would not be torn away from the sight and sound for an hour, though she was drenched by the rain, which fell heavily during the entire time that she was in the glen.

In the spring of 1808,—the season of the year when “mine own romantic town” is in the perfection of its picturesque buildings and gardens, and still more picturesque environs,—the sisters took their way to Edinburgh. The intellectual society of the Scotch metropolis was ready with a great demonstration to welcome an illustrious countrywoman who had brought much honour to Scotland. The Baillies found their home under the most choice roof in the city—the roof of Sir Walter—at 39, Castle Street, where they confirmed a close and affectionate intimacy with the master and every

member of the family down even to the dogs. Lord Jeffrey, under the auspices of the Duchess of Gordon, sought to afford to the world the polite spectacle of exchange of courtesies with his foe. Joanna must have burnt with curiosity to know the brilliant reviewer whom Lucy Aikin thought the only amusing man in Edinburgh, who united French *esprit* to English industry, and who, when he got into a scrape with a hot-blooded Irishman, did not decline to fight a duel to clear it up. But, to her woman's sore heart, in conflict with her unflinching spirit, Jeffrey's flag of truce was but the egotism of a hardened offender. She resolutely and rudely—at all events bluntly—resisted his overtures and the entreaties of mediating friends. She absolutely refused an introduction to the king of critics, and defied his thunderbolts in future *Edinburgh Reviews*. She did not hesitate to declare her reason. Mr. Jeffrey's articles had given her much pain, and caused great disadvantage to her works. “*She considered them written with a desire to exalt the fame of the critic and the popularity of the periodical, without*

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*due regard to justice and propriety of feeling."*

If Mr. Jeffrey so erred, he was by no means the last critic who deserved to be confronted with such an error. As for Joanna, however little she was accustomed to wear her heart on her sleeve, she could no more dissemble her feelings than the weakest woman. She swept past her antagonist with a simple majesty of innocent wrath, which left him smiling and shrugging his shoulders, but in his not ungenerous heart just a little touched.

In this visit to the North, Joanna Baillie and Mary Berry crossed each other. The latter expresses her wish that there had been some "setting and footing together in the course of the jigging about." In August Mary Berry was with Lady Douglas at Bothwell Castle, and recounted her pilgrimage to Joanna's birthplace. "What a pretty place Millheugh is! I walked all down the rocky bed of the river below the bridge, and crossed over the 'stepping-stones' and back again, merely for the pleasure of doing it, and then went all round the house at Millheugh, and to the

wooden bridge which looks at the little cascade up the green walk by the side of the stream. We saw not a human creature, either to welcome or forbid us their premises, which being all open we committed no trespass. I tried the echoes with some lines of *Basil*; but they were dumb, only muttered in return for your name, something about muslin at Glasgow, a pattern of a handkerchief, and some stories of the poor in the villages. Your heroic muse should have taught them better in such a romantic spot.

“I have been over, too, at my own dear little ravine at Blantyre; and if you go there again, you will see Berina (my name in Arcadia) cut upon one of the largest trees by my own fair hand on the 20th August, 1808.”

Early next spring, that of 1809, the great Drury Lane Theatre, where “the other year” Joanna had staked so many hopes and fears, was burned to the ground.

A little later she had it in her power to return some of Sir Walter’s hospitalities. He was in London then, starting the *Quarterly Review*, and had brought up Mrs. Scott, and their little

daughter Sophia. Mr. and Mrs. Scott stayed with their good old French friends, the Dumergues, the surgeon-dentist's family in Piccadilly; but the ten-years-old little girl was sent out, in order to save her rosy cheeks, to Hampstead, to the kind care of the Misses Baillie. Little Sophia, as she helped Miss Agnes in her garden, or trotted by Miss Joanna's side on the Heath, must have renewed remote and recent associations by her chatter of the knowes and the haughs and the deep Tweed pools; of hunting and fishing with papa and Charlie, and running with little Annie and the dogs, in her happy holidays at Ashiestiel. The divided family party were often reunited. There must have been many a cheerful supper and breakfast out at Hampstead, many a merry rendezvous and lunch with Dr. Matthew Baillie's family, then in Cavendish Square. Dainty, dogmatic Mary Berry was not too dignified to be eager to renew her acquaintance with Mr. Scott. She had already met and held "long conversations" with him at Bothwell Castle and at Minto. On the 1st of June he was at a breakfast party at the Berrys,

in North Audley Street, meeting among other company, Sir George Beaumont and Lady Louisa Stewart. Somebody was to read Joanna Baillie's tragedy of *The Family Legend*, which had a particular interest for Miss Berry, having been founded on an incident in the family history of her friend Mrs. Damer, which had been related by Mrs. Damer to Joanna. As nobody but Mary Berry was sufficiently acquainted with Joanna's handwriting, Mary was the somebody who read the tragedy on the occasion of the breakfast in North Audley Street. Mary Berry and Joanna Baillie interchanged such "courtesies" as the reading of each other's MSS., in which courtesies Miss Berry showed an inclination to be her own reader. According to Mary Berry's journal for this April, Joanna came on another morning to North Audley Street, when Mary read to her friend her notice of Madame Dudevant's life. Mary wrote afterwards in her journal that Joanna was so pleased with the notice of the life, that she could not but feel very much flattered. Miss Berry then went, probably in Joanna Baillie's company, "to



Walter Scott's, where I saw his wife for the first time." This was at the Dumergues', who might also have had something to say worth hearing as to French lives and letters ; but Mary Berry fails to chronicle the remarks of the surgeon-dentist's family.

Sir Walter's letters to Joanna Baillie are from this time frequent, full, and instinct with the man's brotherly heart. He laboured with a will in her service, and accomplished for her the acceptance by Henry Siddons, for the Edinburgh Theatre, of her play, *The Family Legend*; and next, he secured the putting of it upon the stage with more undeniable success than attended the representation of *De Montfort* at Drury Lane.

Five years before, while Joanna was much occupied with her infirm mother, Mrs. Damer told Joanna the story of *The Family Legend*. Joanna wanted a subject for a drama, and wanted, also, some diversion at spare moments. She dramatised the story. Very likely her tour two years afterwards in the West Highlands—although she might not go so far as Mull—was



undertaken with some idea of authenticating the scenery of the legend. It was then remarked that Joanna lost no opportunity of entering Highland huts, and of rendering herself familiar with Highland manners and customs. In the end she had a peculiar fondness for this drama, calling it her Highland play, and exulting in its success.

Sir Walter spared no effort that devotion to the author's interest could suggest. He was in constant consultation with Mr. Siddons on the costumes and machinery of the play. He attended every rehearsal, changed names (to obviate the apprehended spleen of the clan Maclean), smoothed difficulties, wooed and coaxed magnates, and wrote the prologue, while Henry Mackenzie wrote the epilogue. He was prominently responsible in his place all through the trying first night, while Mrs. Scott, recalling her early passion for theatricals, did her duty by heading a box thirty friends strong. Finally he was happy to be able to proclaim to the person most interested, the enthusiastic reception of the piece, and its announcement

for the rest of the week. No wonder that Joanna Baillie loved Sir Walter, and Sir Walter loved Joanna. Such an abandonment of kindness is, as Joanna once quoted, "the cords of a man" to knit friend to friend. In effect, *The Family Legend* was not acted more than fourteen nights in Edinburgh; but it was received there with a favour which none of Joanna Baillie's plays received in London. And it is a suggestive fact, that in Edinburgh, where she had no powerful ally save Scott, but where the audience was select and highly cultivated, Joanna Baillie's work was more fully appreciated than on any London stage.

Later the same year, Sir Walter's holidays were spent among the Hebrides in company with his wife, his elder girl, his dog Wallace, and a few friends. From Ulva House he wrote to his "cummer" Joanna, because he could not resist writing to her in places which she had rendered classic and immortal. He gave her a spirited account of the Ladies' Rock, the scene of the exposure of Helen in the legend of Dunstaffnage

and Staffa. He made a blithe summary of the landing in which Charlotte lost her shoes, and little Sophia her collection of pebbles; and of the boating, in which “all the ladies were sick, especially Hannah Mackenzie,” adding triumphantly, “and none of the gentlemen escaped except Staffa and myself.” He begged to tell her that he had picked up for her a hallowed green pebble from the shore of St. Columba, — but the piper was sounding to breakfast.

In the meantime Joanna had the pleasure of visiting her brother at the estate which he had bought in Gloucestershire. Well won and well worn were Matthew Baillie’s medical honours and gains. He had his uncle’s post as a Court physician, and was at this time watching—fruitlessly, in both cases—the lingering decline of Princess Amelia, and the final relapse into madness of “the poor king.” Much need had Dr. Baillie of his Gloucestershire retreat, though he could pay but flying visits to it. Joanna made one “very dear friend” in that neighbourhood, Justina Milligan, of Cotswold House,

whose death she commemorates in one of the last of her writings. Justina was a kindly, cheerful woman, dwelling in a sisterly household like Joanna's own, dispensing her larger gifts of fortune, as Joanna and Agnes dispensed their modest income, with much feeling regard to the poor. And Justina shared Agnes Baillie's love of gardening—the true love which does not confine itself to the service of hired hands, nor call every spot of earth common and unclean save the trim garden and the costly greenhouse. Joanna celebrates a pet spot of Justina's:—

“ Nor did such toward spots alone declare  
Her pleasing fancy and her skillful care ;  
The long-neglected quarry, grim and gray,  
Where rubbish in uncouth confusion lay,  
Loose stones and sand, with weeds and brush-wood rotten,  
And everything or worthless or forgotten,  
Seemed to obey her will, as though by duty  
Constrained, and soon became a place of beauty.  
Its fairy floor is mossy green,  
And o'er its creviced walls, I ween,  
The harebell, foxglove, fern and heather,  
Mingle most lovingly together ;  
While from the upper screen, as bent to see  
What might be hid below, the rowan tree  
And drooping birch seem to look curiously ;

A friendly place, where birds for shelter come,  
And bees, and flies, and moths raise a soft summer hum.  
Justina's quarry ! a name most dear,  
Will henceforth sweetly, sadly soothe the ear."\*

Either before or after Joanna's visit to Gloucestershire, Elizabeth Hamilton revisited London, and spent some days at Hampstead. There the friendship between her and Joanna Baillie was renewed. Their letters afterwards gradually drop the "Madam," or the friends reproach each other with the use of it. They become more and more cordial and confidential. We have only specimens of the correspondence on Mrs. Hamilton's side ; but it is a pleasant glimpse which we get of an old friendship in old letters. In one letter Mrs. Hamilton describes the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, and recurs to a lady whom she remembers as a schoolgirl at Miss Macdonald's. In another, she speaks of fancying herself in the little drawing-room at Hampstead, with one sister on the couch by her side, the other in the snug corner opposite to her, while she herself is

\* Written after Justina Milligan's death.

deliberately putting her feet on the fender for a social "crack." In a third letter, the author of the "Cottagers of Glenburnie" vows that the next time the author of the "Plays of the Passions" visits Scotland, she will insist on taking her to Aberdeen; quoting an anecdote of an old gentleman who had travelled twice through Europe, and had never seen anything to be compared to Aberdeen but—the bay of Naples. Mrs. Hamilton prophesies that if Walter Scott would open the cry about Aberdeen, as he had done about Loch Katrine scenery, how the world would be deafened by reiterated praises!

Among many weightier reflections, Elizabeth Hamilton congratulates Joanna on the happy effect of Joanna's patches on the sofa-cover. Mrs. Hamilton even playfully suggests that a notary ought to have registered the performance in a national record, and demands, "What would a stocking" (she might have said a sock more appropriately), "darned by the hands of Shakspeare, now bring to the lucky owner?"



By November Sir Walter had his Iona pebble or pebbles cut and set as a brooch, in the form of a Scotch harp, with the inscription in Gaelic, "Buail o'n tend" ("Strike the string"), and he sent the brooch as a keepsake to Joanna, with a "God give you joy to wear it." Much did Joanna prize the characteristic gift, and in the earliest and best portrait we have of her, Sir Walter's brooch is represented as fastening her collar.

In May, 1811, Mary Berry went down to Hampstead to stay from Saturday till Monday, and tried the novelty of dining before four o'clock in her friend's simple little household, and of going out on the Heath after dinner and sitting there for above two hours in a "delicious fine evening." Afterwards she and Joanna read over together one of Mary Berry's longer pieces, and criticised it. Some of her other scraps (that she seems to have carried with her for the purpose) were also read and criticised, Mary Berry stating, with her customary frankness, "which I think Joanna liked less than I expected." On



Sunday the friends sat by the fire the whole day, and Joanna gave the others her drama on Hope to read. It was in two acts only, and Mary soon read it. "Very poetical," she commented in her turn (journalising, "and much fancy, as all her things have; but this did not equal my expectation—how high it was I know not. It is certainly a sufficiently dramatic story, but not dramatically managed."

The letters between Edinburgh and Ashiestiel on the one hand, and Hampstead on the other, during the following year, are full of details with regard to Sir Walter's having become a laird on Tweed-side. His earlier, gleeful projects for Abbotsford, beginning so modestly with the cottage having "two spare bed-rooms with dressing-rooms, each of which will, on a pinch, have a couch bed," are also significantly dwelt upon.

Joanna writes: "If I should ever be happy enough to be at Abbotsford, you must take me to see Ashiestiel too. I have a kind of tenderness for it, as one has for a man's first wife, when you hear he has married a second."

In 1811, ere the volume was before the public and subjected to the critics, Joanna sent to Sir Walter an early copy of her third volume of the "Plays of the Passions." It contains *Orra* and *The Dream*, two tragedies, and *The Siege*, a comedy on Fear, with *The Beacon*, a musical drama on Hope. She declared that it was to be her last publication, and that she was getting her knitting needles in order—meaning to begin her new course of industry with a purse for her friend, in return for his Iona brooch. Sir Walter was enchanted with the last plays. He read *Orra* twice to himself, and had Terry, the actor, to read it to him, in a sympathetic circle, a third time. In January, 1812, Sir Walter sent Joanna an ancient silver mouth-piece, to which she might adapt his purse. He protested that this was a genteel way of tying her down to her promise; and he engaged, on his part, that the purse should not hold bank notes or vulgar bullion, but pretty little medals and nicknackets. He ended a long letter by a very frank reference to his bargains with his publishers and the state of his affairs. In April, when one of the hardest

Border springs on record was signalising itself by mail coaches stopped and shepherds lost in the snow, the arrival of "the elegant and acceptable token of your regard" was duly acknowledged by Sir Walter, and a full and serious letter on the comparative advantages of London and Edinburgh society, on her literary prospects and on his, and on Lord Byron's "Childe Harold," was<sup>\*</sup> closed with a list of the contents of the purse as they then stood:—

"1st. Miss Elizabeth Baillie's" (Matthew's daughter) "purse penny" (sent to prevent the purse's travelling empty), "called by the learned a denarius of the Empress Faustina.

"2nd. A gold brooch found in a bog in Ireland, which, for aught I know, fastened the mantle of an Irish princess in the days of Cuthullen or Neal of the Nine Hostages.

"3rd. A toadstone—a celebrated amulet, which was never lent to any one, unless upon a bond for a thousand marks for its being safely restored. It was sovereign for protecting new-born children and their mothers from the power of the fairies, and has been

repeatedly borrowed from my mother on account of this virtue.

“4th. A coin of Edward I., found in Dryburgh Abbey.

“5th. A funeral ring, with Dean Swift’s hair.

“So, you see,” Sir Walter winds up the catalogue gallantly, “my nicknackatory is well supplied, though the purse is more valuable than all its contents.”

In that triumphant war year of 1812, when illuminated London, seen from Hampstead, must have stood out often against the sky like a crown of carbuncles, Joanna wished to learn the mind of the *Edinburgh Review*, whether it remained the same towards her, or whether it had changed. She had not to wait long, and the oracle gave no doubtful sound. Sir Walter, to soften the blow—if it could be called so, after what had gone before—had written that he had been told Jeffrey talked very favourably of this latest volume however. Sir Walter added, “I should be glad, for his own sake, that he took some opportunity to retrace the paths of his

criticism ; but after pledging himself so deeply as he has done, I doubt much his giving way even unto conviction." Sir Walter's doubts were fulfilled. In the *Edinburgh Review* for February Mr. Jeffrey out-Heroded Herod, in his effort to crush Joanna Baillie's theory and practice. He prefaced his article by reminding Miss Baillie and the public, with an almost pompous and an entirely autocratic solemnity, that, in spite of his previous admonitions, she had gone on (as he had expected) in her own way, and had become (as he had expected) both less popular and less deserving of popularity in every successive publication. He then entered into a masterly analysis of ancient Greek and modern French dramatic literature, comparing these with the masterpieces of the English stage, and making out to his own satisfaction that Joanna Baillie had managed to combine the faults of all schools. Not content with accusing her of tameness, slowness, and awkwardness in the business of the plays—comparing it to travelling through a dull stage in the central Scottish Highlands—he deliberately de-

nied to her the power of delineating individual character, on which as he alleged, she built, with undue confidence, her claims as a dramatist. He charged her at once with heaviness and poverty of style; he impugned her judgment, her taste, and her musical ear. After he had found so much to condemn, it becomes hard to guess what he could discover to praise; but he did suffer himself to accredit her with moral purity, considerable knowledge of human nature, and good sense. He almost excepted in his strictures the little drama on Hope, which had not taken Mary Berry's fancy, though its merits certainly did not consist in the fable, nor in the delineation of character. Finally he admitted that he had stumbled on fine passages, few and far between in the plays; and he recorded that "Miss Baillie's forte was in the delineation of horror"—though she did it coarsely. From such a verdict, at once cold-blooded and sweeping, there was no appeal. Joanna, like Wordsworth, resigned herself to bear the brunt of a perpetual feud with the *Edinburgh Review* and its formidable staff, thankful



for one small mercy, that she had not consented to waive her honest feelings, and make the acquaintance of Mr. Jeffrey when she was in Edinburgh.

At a small party given by Miss Berry in North Audley Street, in June, 1813, Joanna made one of the ten ladies who, well supported by twenty-six gentlemen, were honoured with invitations to meet Madame de Staël. We do not have Joanna's version of the impression left on her by the swarthy, impassioned, ambitious Corinne. But we find Mary Berry scribbling that Joanna had been less reserved than usual, and was much pleased with Madame de Staël; and again that Madame de Staël did not know what to make of a person whose life was so totally different from her own. In truth, few literary women could have stood—alike in their antecedents and nurture—nearer to the antipodes from each other, than she who was born in the manse of Bothwell and matured in the doctor's house in Windmill Street, and she who grew up amid the philosophic discussions of the salons of Paris, the



tempest of the great French Revolution, and whose career culminated in an attempt to raise a centre of political influence in opposition to that of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Further on in the year, another literary woman, with whom Joanna had more in common, and who became, indeed, her fast friend, came up to town. This was Maria Edgeworth, in company with her father and his fourth wife, her young stepmother.

Maria Edgeworth's winning warmth and vivacity, with its backbone of sound sense, broke down the barrier of Joanna Baillie's caution and shyness. The grave, silent Scotch-woman was fascinated, and her own dry native humour flowed and sparkled. It was "Maria" and "Joanna" between them in a very short time. Sir Walter, too, submitted willingly to the spell exercised by the keen, tiny Irish-woman. He declared that her quaint, fairy-like appearance, reminded him of the "whippit stourie" of nursery tales. It caught his sense of drollery; while her naïvete and ardour delighted him. The easy, unaffected manner in which

she carried her well-deserved fame, secured his respect and admiration. She and Joanna Baillie were thenceforth correspondents not less intimate and regular than were Joanna and Sir Walter.

In 1813, Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton writes to Joanna, describing a tour which she and her sister had made in Wales, and a visit they had paid to the two ladies then masquerading as hermits in a nook of the principality. In 1814, while Joanna's friend Sir Walter was voyaging to Orkney, Joanna and her sister followed Mrs. Hamilton's and Mrs. Blake's example, receiving the mock condolence of the former for losing, in the interest of blue mountains and foaming waterfalls, the crush fêtes with which London celebrated the presence of the allied princes, and at which these august men and their womankind occasionally "showed their backs."

In the same letter, Elizabeth Hamilton asks Joanna if she had heard of "Waverley," a novel supposed to be by the pen of Walter Scott. Mrs. Hamilton had only seen the first volume, but

was so charmed with it that she was all impatience for the remainder. She takes it for granted that Joanna had, of course, seen the "Queen's Wake." In a letter from the same good judge next year, she exclaims in exultation, "Let no one say that imagination does not operate on this side of the Tweed! What do you think of 'Discipline?' of 'Waverley?' of 'Guy Mannering?' . . . . The two last are portrait pieces of first-rate excellence; the painter, a Gerard Dow,—not a Michael Angelo,—but in his own peculiar department coming near perfection. Though the name of Scott does not grace the title-page, it is seen in every other page of both performances."

This was nearly the last letter which Elizabeth Hamilton wrote to Joanna Baillie. In one other, Mrs. Hamilton touches on some troubles which were harassing her last days. She does not forget to record how much she had been pleased with the description a Professor Y. had given her of Joanna's niece, Matthew's daughter. The two friends had anticipated from this quarter a harvest of happiness, which

one of them lived to reap; and Elizabeth Hamilton, whose own expectations in somewhat similar circumstances appear to have been thwarted and her hopes disappointed, still does not fail to congratulate Joanna on her brighter experience, and to moralise sagely on the satisfactory result that young Miss Baillie's gifts and graces were not spoiled "by the varnish of affectation and conceit."

Yes, Joanna knew "Waverley" and "Guy Mannering," though "Abbotsford and Kaeside," had not taken her formally into his confidence any more than he had taken the immediate members of his own family. She was prepared to feel a sisterly glory in a fame which was to transcend all living literary fame that had gone before it in Great Britain. She had written to him in prospect of his visit to London in March, 1815, in the midst of the excitement produced by the news of Bonaparte's escape from Elba. "Thank Heaven you are coming at last. Make up your mind to be stared at only a little less than the Czar of Moscow or old Blucher." The reception accorded to the author of "Marmion" six years before,

was brilliant, but ten times more brilliant was that given to the reputed author of "Waverley." Princes came forward to do him honour. He was presented at the Prince Regent's levee, dined at Carlton House, and received from his future king a gold snuff-box, in token of regard. The snuff-box was set in brilliants, and had a medallion of his Royal Highness's head on the lid.

Sir Walter was accompanied, as before, by Mrs. Scott and his daughter Sophia. He and his wife again stayed with the Dumergues, in Piccadilly; and Sophia, a girl of sixteen, too delicate a blossom for the late hours and the hot rooms of London, was sent out, as formerly, to the maidenly home at Hampstead. She was musically gifted, and was old enough to while their hearts and ears by singing to them and their evening visitors her father's favourite ballads, "Kenmure's on and awa, Willie," and "A weary lot is thine, fair maid," or blithe, unpublished songs—Miss Joanna's own—"Saw ye Johnnie comin', quo' she?" and "Wooed an' married an' a'."

During his stay in London, Sir Walter met Lord Byron, and became on cordial terms with him. Lady Byron, who was then with her husband, pining in his shadow, had been Joanna's dear young friend, and Lord Byron was her personal acquaintance. She recalled the unhappy couple long afterwards.

“I see her mated with a moody lord,  
Whose fame she prized, whose genius she adored.  
There by his side she stands, pale, grave, and sad,  
The brightness of her greeting smile is fled.  
Like some fair flower ta'en from its genial mould  
To deck a garden-border loose and cold,  
Its former kindred fences all destroyed,  
Shook by the breeze, and by the rake annoy'd,  
She seemed, alas ! I looked and looked again,  
Tracing the sweet but alter'd face in vain.”

Joanna Baillie's play of *The Family Legend* was acted at the new Drury Lane Theatre in the course of Sir Walter's stay in town. She was persuaded to go with him, Mrs. Scott, and Lord Byron, to witness the representation. Her power of self-control could stand her in good stead, and she was well supported. Elizabeth Hamilton had said, on first coming to Edinburgh, that



she had seen more men and women of genius standing up in one quadrille than could be found throughout the rest of Europe. The same might have been said of one box in Drury Lane, that night. Yet how few of the simple, honest playgoers guessed that to the slightly rigid little figure of the ageing woman in sober-hued silk, and delicate lace, seated in one of the boxes above them, they owed the heroic sentiments and thrilling situations at which they clapped their hands. Mary Berry saw the performance from Lady Hardwicke's box, either on that evening or on another of the same week. The piece was played for Mr. Bentley's benefit. Mary Berry's opinion was that it could not have been worse acted. Yet she regarded the representation as to some extent a success, and recorded that the fine lines, spoilt though they were, certainly were appreciated and applauded by the pit. Such appreciation and applause must have moved Joanna more than the tribute of the great men who sat beside her, for it was her cherished wish—fated to be baffled—that she should help to raise the stage, and with it the



masses who sought from it excitement and entertainment.

Sir Walter did not revisit London, when he hurried to see the battle-field of Waterloo. He sailed from Harwich, and wrote to Joanna, instead of to Paul's kinsfolk, from Paris, giving statistics of the battle, the allied army, and the French capital. But he saw her on his return, when he could speak of nothing but Waterloo.

From 1815 to 1820 were quiet years in Joanna Baillie's life. It really seemed as if she meant to keep her word, and write no more. In 1815 or 1816, while her friends the Berrys were in Paris, she took a trip to France with the rest of the English world who rushed to see the lares and penates of their enemy; but neither Versailles nor Fontainebleau inspired her. She was resting on her laurels, let the *Edinburgh Review* say what it liked, and enjoying her friend's laurels, especially those fresh ones gathered by her great countryman in "Rob Roy," the "Heart of Midlothian," the "Bride of Lammermoor," and "Ivanhoe." Engrossed by work, and half

worshipped as he was, he did not forget her. He sent her a boyishly joyous description of "Joanna's Bower" (it must have reminded her of her Gloucestershire friends with their "Justina's Quarry"), which he had planned out of an old gravel pit in his grounds, and had planted with the pinasters that she had sent him. He wrote expressly to tell her how glad he had been to receive poor Lady Byron, and how much he admired and was touched by the forlorn wife. There was a constant interchange of friendly tokens between Hampstead and Abbotsford, from purses and pinasters to grouse and Glenlivet.

In 1817 the polished, accomplished gentleman whose love had cost him his inheritance, and who is remembered as the father of Mary and Agnes Berry, died at Geneva. Joanna, who had last seen him in Paris, wrote to his daughter Mary a long sympathetic letter, lamenting the friend who had always been kind to Joanna. Within a few years she herself was to need the same sympathy in a more unlooked for, and more trying parting.

In 1828 Sir Walter was up in London receiving his baronetcy, and was in a great hurry to get back to Edinburgh before the month of April was ended. The marriage of his daughter Sophia, grown, as her father loved to call her, "a bonnie lass," and a very gentle one, to John Lockhart, in the promise of his youth, was to be celebrated ere May should bring its evil omen. One Sunday Sir Walter spared to Hampstead, Joanna Baillie, and Johnnie Richardson, carrying out with him his "long cornet," young Walter Scott. And doubtless, among Sir Walter's many lady friends to whom he told with characteristic grace "the old, old story" of his young lovers, there were none who would be more interested than the friends—old ones then, who had taken charge once and again of young Sophia Scott, to note her growth, and speculate on her fortunes. Very likely it was on that April Sunday at Hampstead that Sir Walter got Joanna and Agnes Baillie to fix on going down to Scotland that summer once more, because Joanna, the younger, was already fifty-seven, and age, with its disinclination to move

from the chimney-corner, its timidity, and its helplessness, was looming at no remote distance.

Therefore, in 1820, Joanna and her sister were again in Scotland. They were in the West, where they saw their old friends, without remarking in them the gulf between the past and the present which had struck the Baillies on their former visit. They were in Edinburgh, where Joanna at last consented to be introduced to Jeffrey, and when the author and the reviewer agreed to "let bygones be bygones." The two were older now, and one of them had had time to become more temperate in her earnestness, without making a compromise of principles, or even of theories. When advancing life called a truce between the foes, they were both great enough to sink all personal offences and meet as friends. And very good friends the rigid opponents proved. Jeffrey never visited London latterly without going out to Hampstead to taste the hospitality, and be enlivened by the conversation, of Joanna Baillie.

On this sojourn in Edinburgh, Joanna wit-

nessed a second time a representation of one of her plays. In this instance, there was an overflowing house. Her person was widely known, and her presence roused alike actors and spectators to the height of enthusiasm. The resounding plaudits were a national offering laid at the feet of Joanna. Gratefully, and with noble simplicity, as she received the demonstration, it had this qualification, that it was only after the play had been changed to a melodrama, and with the spur lent to the audience by their knowledge of the author, that her tragedy of *Constantine* could thus inspire an assembly.

Above all, Joanna visited Abbotsford, where Gustavus, Prince Royal of Sweden, and Prince Leopold, had been before her. Sir Walter and Tom Purdie were alike in their glory, and no cloud the size of a man's hand had yet risen on the broad blue horizon. Lockhart and his wife were prolonging their wedding festivities in the Forest. Strangers more or less brilliant and famous, from all circles and regions, including the farther side of the Atlantic, were "turn-

ing" up every day, sending in their cards and letters of introduction, and being liberally entertained by Sir Walter. The old families of Yair, Elibank, and Gala, were making much of their Sheriff's holidays, and hugging him to their heart. The Kelso races and the Jedburgh ball were still "life" and "the world." Sir William Allan, Sir Humphry Davy, old Henry Mackenzie, were to be seen in one group. Sibyl Grey and Maida were among the dumb animals, and the Abbotsford Hunt (a coursing match) and the Abbotsford Kirn were among the entertainments. The scenery was that of the "sillar Tweed," "fair Melrose," and the Eildon hills. In the absence of journal or letters on Joanna's side, or of any incidental notice in Sir Walter's Life, there is no particular record of those swiftly passing days. But surely Joanna was taken not to Ashiestiel alone, but to "lone St. Mary's," to Carterhaugh, with its bloom of blue bells, and to grey Dryburgh; there would be long chats in the library, toasts at the dinner-table, and songs to the harp in the drawing-room, commemorating a period



which was unapproachable to three or four of those present at Abbotsford.

As if the sight of her native country had stirred the gift that was in her, Joanna, on her return home, wrote her "Metrical Legends." In them, she went back to the traditions of her youth, and made her far-away ancestor and ancestress, Wallace and Lady Grisel Baillie, her chief hero and chief heroine. This book was brought out in 1821. The same year *De Montfort* was revived at Drury Lane, this time by Edmund Kean, but without any greater success in securing the public ear and voice.

The year 1821, also, brought the death of Joanna's aunt, Mrs. John Hunter, so long a graceful leader of intellectual fashion.

During the dog-days, Sir Walter is found writing to Joanna, that Mackay is going up to London, to play Baillie Nicol Jarvie for a single night at Covent Garden. He begs her and Mrs. Agnes, "of all dear loves," to go and see the character in its inimitable personification, to collect a party of Scotch friends (as he had written Sotheby to do), that they might have the



treat, "and so let it not be said that a dramatic genius of Scotland wanted the countenance and protection of Joanna Baillie."

In a postscript to the letter quoted, Sir Walter entreats Joanna to read, and have Mrs. Agnes read to her (alluding to a practice of the sisters), Galt's "Annals of the Parish," "a most excellent novel, if it can be called so."

In 1822, Joanna's attention was often called to Edinburgh, which was in a state of mad excitement at the proposed visit of George IV. Never king had such a master of the ceremonies, since Rubens' health failed at the last moment, and prevented him from conducting the Cardinal Infant through Antwerp. In the meantime Joanna was busy collecting "Poems, chiefly Manuscript, and from living authors; edited, for the benefit of a Friend, by Joanna Baillie," which were to be printed and sold by subscription. A family, intimate in the sisterly house at Hampstead, had fallen into misfortune, and on their behalf Joanna gathered these crumbs from literary tables. She gave original pieces of her own, of Mrs. Hemans', and of Mrs. John Hunter's.

She begged the same from Sir Walter Scott, and Miss Catherine Fanshaw, whose refined and arch humour made so deep an impression on her contemporaries. Joanna had the great satisfaction, very unusual under the circumstances, of raising by her efforts a sum which secured a small competence for her friends.

About this time the Baillies' neighbour, Mr. Richardson, was down buying an estate on Tweedside. Sir Walter heard all the news of Hampstead from him, and sent back with him a bottle of old whisky, accompanied with the assertion that if Joanna would drink enough of it, she would forgive him all his later offences as a correspondent. Sir Walter's letters began to come more sparsely, though they were delightful as ever when they did come. They were still genial and fresh, even after the writer had been caught in the toils, and was struggling manfully in the unequal battle to redeem the fortunes which had once promised so splendidly. Now they were describing his visit to Ireland, and the perfect reception which he had met with from his and Joanna's dear friend, Maria Edgeworth.

Again they dwelt on whatever book or public affair was occupying him at the time. Always they detailed home news—of the “long Cornet’s” marriage, of Sophia’s baby—all the incidents that were happening in the histories of those “honest lads and bonnie lasses, maids, matrons, and bachelors bluff,”—including “little John Hugh, or, as he is popularly styled, Hugh Little John,” in whom his grandfather so delighted,—who, like Sir Walter’s father’s large but short-lived family, were nearly all of them destined to pass away—

“Like snaw-wreaths in thaw,”

long before the elderly woman, Sir Walter’s contemporary, to whom he described their starting in life.

In 1823, Joanna and Agnes Baillie were bereaved indeed by the death of their brother, Matthew. He died before he reached old age, at his seat in Gloucestershire. Joanna, a worn and grey-haired woman, in her sixtieth year, was summoned to his side, and beheld the breaking up of his constitution with the deepest grief. Among his nearest and dearest she waited

on him, as she had waited on her mother, day and night, supporting all around her by her mingled firmness and tenderness. The public sorrow on the occasion of Dr. Baillie's death had a healing balm for his afflicted family. The thought of the tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey, put there by his medical brethren, was more cherished by Joanna than any expectation of monumental honour for herself. She wrote to announce the sad event to Sir Walter Scott. He replied in a reverent, gentle, pitying letter of condolence, recording his friendship for the dead, and pointing to another state of existence as a cure for unavailing sorrow. He reminded her, "You are a family of love; though one breach has been made among you, you will only extend your arms towards each other the more, to hide, though you cannot fill up, the gap which has been made."

Every-day life abounds in pathetic contrasts. This year George Thomson, the friend of Burns, republished his "Melodies of Scotland." He included in the book many of Joanna Baillie's, 'heartsome' fire-side songs, paraphrases of

ditties of the familiar olden time, such as Matthew Baillie might have hummed and whistled when he was a "bauld laddie" at Bothwell or Hamilton schools, and Joanna was a morsel of mischief in hood and "doddy mittens," climbing, not the hill of fame, but outside stairs and garden walls.

Solemnised by the blow which had robbed life of half its ties and joys, Joanna occupied herself soon afterwards with a drama, which was full of her deep religious feeling. This play, *The Martyr*, was not brought out till 1826. Sir Alexander Johnston, Chief Justice of Ceylon, believing that it might have a beneficial effect on the natives under his government, procured its translation into the Cingalese, as well as that of *The Bride*, a companion drama, which he had requested from Joanna for the same purpose. Whether the morals of the natives of Ceylon were improved by the dramas, or whether, indeed, the attempt was brought to completion, is uncertain; but the thought was praiseworthy, and must have been acceptable to Joanna.

In 1826 came the great crash of the house of

Constable, in which Sir Walter was fatally involved. The hopeless decline of Johnnie Lockhart followed; and, in the spring of the same year, Sir Walter's wife, who had been his partner for twenty-nine years, passed away. These were griefs which Joanna Baillie shared, though the ready pen of her friend staggered and stopped short in conveying tidings of the misery of that time to Hampstead. In the autumn of that year, Sir Walter and his daughter Anne were with the Lockharts in Pall Mall. Sir Walter was on his way to France, to authenticate his materials for the *Life of Bonaparte*. There was a wide difference between this visit and the Author of "*Waverley's*" gala reception in 1815. Still, Sir Walter continued able for company, and could even enjoy it. In his journal of the 15th of November, he notes with satisfaction: "At dinner we had a little blow-out on Sophia's part. Lord Dudley, Mr. Hay, Under-Secretary of State, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Mistress (as she now calls herself) Joanna Baillie and her sister came in the evening. The whole went off pleasantly."



In 1828, Joanna received, in place of Mary Berry's manuscripts, Mary Berry's books—"The Life of Rachel Lady Russell," and the "Comparative View of Social Life in France and England." Joanna's criticism on the last is very characteristic. After praising highly its clear and scholarly style, its liberality and rectitude, she goes on to say that for her part she would have liked the book better had Mary given the world less of court anecdote and more of illustration of the manners of the middling classes of society. There was another thing of which Joanna disapproved—the account given of Voltaire's mistress, Madame de Charte. She urged also that the mention made of the piece of malice perpetrated by Lady Mary Wortley Montague on the disagreeable adventure of Lady Murray, was an offence to that delicacy which was expected in the writings of a woman. Joanna said she honestly pointed out these blemishes, because they had been felt by others whose judgment and feelings she respected, although the generality of readers might not see them in the same light, because Mary Berry had



desired to hear her sincere opinion, and because the work itself had sufficient merit to afford such exceptions to its praise.

Mary Berry's answer is equally characteristic. She expressed herself flattered by Joanna's praise, and almost as much by her blame. Had she proposed writing a comparative view of *manners* instead of "social life" she would have found, and so would Joanna, that the *manners* of the "middling classes of society" in both countries were always a bad imitation of the upper. As to the charge of "offending the delicacy which is expected in the writings of a woman," Mary Berry had chiefly to say that if women treat of human nature and human life in history and not in fiction (which, perhaps, they had better not do), human nature and human life are often indelicate; and if such passages in them are treated always with the gravity and the reprobation they deserve, it is all a sensible woman can do, and, as she is not writing for children, all that she can think necessary.

Notwithstanding such differences of opinion

between Joanna Baillie and Mary Berry, their friendship wore well, and was renewed personally in the intervals between Miss Berry's foreign tours. According to these very letters—portions of which have been given—Mary Berry had just been to Hampstead and had missed Joanna, to the regret of the latter, who had gone up to town to remain at her sister-in-law's in Cavendish Square during some days, for the better opportunity of meeting Sir Walter and his daughter, again living with the Lockharts in Pall Mall.

Overwork, anxiety, and family affliction were telling plainly on Sir Walter, when Joanna saw him at the London dinner parties on two successive days, which were interludes in her country life. Sir Walter also went out and breakfasted with her at Hampstead. He thus refers to the visit in his diary—"Found that gifted person extremely well and in the possession of all her native character and benevolence. I would give as much to have a capital picture of her as for any portrait in the world."

So far as word painting can go, a charming

portrait of Joanna Baillie, dating from not many years after this period, has been very kindly and courteously granted to this book by one of Joanna's few distinguished contemporaries who survive—one whose name will remain a household word among us, Harriet Martineau. "A sweeter picture of old age was never seen. Her figure was small, light, and active; her countenance, in its expression of serenity, harmonised wonderfully with her gay conversation and her cheerful voice. Her eyes were beautiful, dark, bright, and penetrating, with the full, innocent gaze of childhood. Her face was altogether comely, and her dress did justice to it. She wore her own silvery hair and a mob cap, with its delicate lace border fitting close round her face. She was well-dressed in handsome dark silks, and her lace caps and collars looked always new. No Quaker ever was neater, while she kept up with the times in her dress as in her habit of mind, as far as became her years. In her whole appearance there was always something for even the passing stranger to admire, and never anything for

the most familiar friend to wish otherwise." Add to this graphic description Lucy Aikin's delicate touch—"No one would ever have taken her for a married woman. An innocent and maiden grace still hovered over her to the end of her old age. It was one of her peculiar charms, and often brought to my mind the line addressed to the vowed Isabella in *Measure for Measure*—

‘I hold you for a thing enskied and saintly,’”—

and surely the portrait is complete. It would seem, indeed, that Joanna, though she accuses herself in one of her letters to Mary Berry of gathering thorns to sit upon them, and fears that she is "ower auld to mend," increased in depth of serenity and in brightness of cheerfulness as she advanced in age. It might well be the reward of her truly noble and gentle career, though some heavy losses and baffling disappointments had befallen her. In the process the strong, generous wine of her nature had been mellowed, and every harsh outline in her character had been softened.

Their opportunities of meeting in 1828 were

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apparently the last which Joanna had of holding intercourse with her dear friend, Sir Walter Scott. If she saw him again after he was a stricken and dying man, when he had advanced so far as London on his continental journey, no memorandum of the circumstance has been preserved, unless among her own papers.

In the summer of 1828 Joanna was with her sister for some time in Devonshire. A passage in a letter to Mary Berry, written nearly ten years later, gives an idea of how much the Baillies had been pleased with the places they saw and the friends they made there. "I should have liked very much to have seen Mrs. Banister," wrote Joanna, in allusion to a Devonshire friend. "I am pleased that she has anything in her house to put her in mind of me. I cannot recall her neat, pretty house, and all the fair country in her neighbourhood, without having a shade of melancholy pass across my mind."

In 1831, Joanna gave publicity to her religious opinions, which, in one mystery of the Christian faith, coincided with those of Milton. Her

essay was named "A View of the General Tenor of the New Testament regarding the Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ." Apart from any peculiarity in her religious creed, Joanna had always been a godly woman in the simplest and best sense of the term. Her remarkable integrity and truthfulness, the meekness to which she had subdued a temper naturally vehement and impatient, and her careful fulfilment of all obligations, were the fruits of her principles. If anything was at first wanting of mercy and pity for the shortcomings of weakness and error, the grace vouchsafed to the grateful experience of her long and earnest life, supplied the deficiency. She had "a constant sense of the unseen, a constant looking forward to the realisation of eternal verities." Her religious convictions had not become less binding with years; on the contrary, she considered that years gave her a title to utter her convictions. Her book, with the peculiarity of faith which it contained, awakened some opposition and caused some offence, which she wistfully deprecated in a letter sent to Mary



Berry on the second edition of the essay being published. Her tone is altered since she fought for her dramatic theory with Jeffrey; moderation is lent to it by the sacredness of the subject as well as by the old heart grown

“Subdued and slow.”

“I thank you and Mrs. Somerville for the friendly interest you take in me, which makes you regret my ‘coming forward as a sectarian.’ This expression struck me, for I consider myself as less of a sectarian than almost any one whom I am acquainted with. I have endeavoured to set in array, for the use of common readers, all the texts of the New Testament bearing upon a certain point of faith, leaving every one to judge for himself from the general tenor of the whole. . . . We have very High Church people here, Calvinists and Evangelists also; but I have never heard that any one of them ever *said* one unkind thing regarding me, and I am sure they have never *done* one.”

In 1832, all England—nay, all Europe—lamented the death of Sir Walter Scott, after so rapid an overthrow of bodily and mental



vigour that the death seemed untimely. None lamented him more truly than Joanna Baillie.

In 1836, when Joanna was seventy-four, she was forced to relinquish the last expectation of seeing her plays become well-worked stage property. Accordingly, she published a complete edition of her dramas, including, among others not before published, three additional plays on the passions,—*Romiero*, a tragedy; *The Alienated Manor*, a comedy; and *Henriquez*, a tragedy,—with jealousy and remorse for their themes. She had intended that what were new of these later plays should be first published after her death, and then offered for representation to the smaller theatres; but not auguring favourably of the prospects of the stage, she determined to publish these remaining plays, desiring to round off her original design at once. In her preface, she refers pathetically to the reduced ranks of the friends who were left to hail the last of the dramas, the first of which they had welcomed with so much sympathy. But if Death had robbed her of many friends, she had at least lived to disarm

one foe. In the *Edinburgh Review* for 1836, appeared a highly appreciative and laudatory article on the collected edition of the plays, with special reference to those which were new to the public. The writer still condemned the plan of the series, and reckoned several of the plays decidedly below the level of the others; but, contemplating Joanna Baillie's finished work as a whole, with respect to the success attained and the difficulties combated, he fairly and honourably admitted that he had altered his opinion. No longer comparing her to the dramatists of the reigns of Elizabeth and James, but matching her with her contemporaries, he frankly owned her superiority to Byron and Scott as dramatists.

Then followed a generous and admiring analysis of Joanna Baillie's plays, with ample quotations from scenes and passages of singular power, tenderness, and grace.

After the article in the *Edinburgh Review* was written, but before it was published, a grand effort was made to establish Joanna's plays on the English stage. Two of them, *Henri-*

*quez* and *The Separation*, were brought out simultaneously at Covent Garden and Drury Lane. One of the Kembles survived to lend his aid to the part of Garcia, and Mr. Vandenhoff supported that of Henriquez; but the verdict of the mass of playgoers was unreversed. The reviewer could only add to his article a note to the effect—"Nothing has led us so completely to despair of the revival of true dramatic taste among us as the announcement we have just noticed in a newspaper, that *Henriquez*, when represented before a London audience, had been treated, like its predecessors, with comparative coldness; and that its announcement for repetition had been received with some tokens of disapprobation."

In a letter to Mary Berry, of May, 1836, Joanna mentions having been in town, where she dined out twice, and went to Drury Lane to see Mrs. Bartley in *Lady Macbeth*. She said these were great exertions for her, as they certainly were, even for a light and active old lady of seventy-five years. She adds, with a pardonable inclination to divide at

least the causes of failure, "I thought, while in town, I might have got some information that might have enabled me to answer your query—'What has become of *Henriquez*?' but I could learn nothing. I dare say there has been some quarrelling in the green-room about it, and that the actors have not liked their parts, though the piece was so favourably received by a very full house. However this may be, I don't expect it to be produced in Drury Lane again." Then she drops the subject, and proceeds to describe Lady Byron's school for boys of the common ranks at Ealing, a pioneer industrial school. Joanna admired the arrangement by which the boys were instructed in trades while they received ordinary education; and prophesied that the boys would be especially qualified for new settlers in the colonies; verifying the prediction by the statement that the carpenters and the gardeners of Acton and Ealing were "mighty glad to have the boys for apprentices."

The play of *Romio* met with considerable general criticism, on the ground that its ex-

pression of jealousy was inconsistent with the interest and the dignity of tragedy. Joanna had still sufficient spirit to defend her play from these strictures in *Fraser's Magazine* for December, 1836.

If it could be any consolation to Joanna for this comparative failure as a dramatist, her fame was great in America. She (as well as her friend Lucy Aikin) was in frequent correspondence with Dr. Channing. Beyond the Atlantic, she had many other distinguished correspondents, who occasionally sent representatives to knock at her readily-opened door at Hampstead. She even received a diploma, constituting her a member of the Michigan Historical Society, and declared herself proud of the compliment.

In 1837, Joanna wrote to Mary Berry, who was only one year younger—"May God support both you and me, and give us comfort and consolation when it is most wanted. As for myself, I do not wish to be one year younger than I am, and have no desire, were it possible, to begin life again, even under the most honour-

able circumstances. I have great cause for humble thankfulness, and I am thankful."

In 1840, Lord Jeffrey, an ageing, failing man himself, was in England, and recorded of his ancient antagonist:—"I have been twice out to Hampstead and found Joanna Baillie as fresh, natural, and amiable as ever, and as little like a tragic muse." In 1842 he again wrote of her—"She is marvellous in health and spirits; not a bit deaf, blind, or torpid." And this was when Joanna had reached that term of four-score which, when attained, is so often "but labour and sorrow."

It was about this time that Joanna published her last book. It was of a different order from the others, being a volume of "Fugitive Verses," republished from her early poems of nearly fifty years before, together with some songs published for the first time. These verses were for the most part simple lyrics on domestic anniversaries, and addressed to private friends. She stated in the preface that she had been induced to bring out this last volume, partly in consequence of discovering that some of her scattered pieces



had been extracted and preserved by judges whom she esteemed, and partly in consequence of the warmly-expressed opinion in favour of her early and neglected poems which had been given by her friend, Samuel Rogers. She commented on the period at which most of the verses were written. Miss Seward, Hayley, and Burns (who was hardly known in England) were then the poets spoken of in literary circles as affording models for poetic composition; and she bespoke the world's indulgence for her lyrics rather on the ground of their being a homely, refreshing variety than on any other. She explained, in order to avoid the imputation of forwardness or presumption, that the psalms marked "for the Kirk," were written at the request of an eminent member of the Scotch Church, at a time when a new collection of hymns was contemplated for the use of parochial congregations. She declared that it would have gratified her extremely to have been of the smallest service to the venerable Church of her native land, "which the conscientious zeal of the great majority of an intelligent and virtuous nation had founded;



which their unconquerable courage, endurance of persecution, and unwearied perseverance, had reared into a Church as effective for private virtue and ecclesiastical government as any Protestant establishment in Europe." She was proud to be so occupied; her heart and her duty went along with the occupation; but the General Assembly refused their sanction to the measure. The daughter of the former minister of Bothwell and Hamilton vindicated loyally the decision of the Assembly, which rendered useless what she and "far better poets" had written for the purpose. She urged it as a circumstance at which we ought not to be surprised, "that clergymen who had been accustomed from their youth to hear the noble Psalms of David sung by the mingled voices of a large congregation, swelling often to a sublime volume of sound, elevating the mind and quickening the feelings beyond all studied excitement of art, should regard any additions or changes as presumptuous."

In the lines addressed to her sister, Joanna gives a very graceful and tender picture of the two women in their peaceful home, occupied with the pursuits of their genial old age.

“ Let what will engage  
Thy present moment, whether hopeful seeds  
In garden-plot thou sow, or noxious weeds  
From the fair flower remove, or ancient lore  
In chronicle or legend rare explore,  
Or on the parlour hearth with kitten play,  
Stroking its tabby sides, or take thy way  
To gain with hasty steps some cottage door,  
On helpful errand to the neighbouring poor,  
Active and ardent to my fancy's eye,  
Thou still art young, in spite of time gone by.  
Though oft of patience brief, and temper keen,  
Well may it please me, in life's latter scene,  
To think what now thou art and long to me hast been.

\* \* \* \*

And now, in later years, with better grace,  
Thou help'st me still to hold a welcome place  
With those whom nearer neighbourhood has made  
The friendly cheerers of our evening shade.  
With thee my humours, whether grave or gay,  
Or gracious or untoward, have their way—  
Silent if dull—O precious privilege !  
I sit by thee ; or if, cull'd from the page  
Of some huge ponderous tome, which, but thyself,  
None e'er had taken from its dusty shelf,  
Thou read me curious passages, to speed  
The winter night, I take but little heed,  
And thankless say, 'I cannot listen now,'  
'Tis no offence ; albeit much do I owe  
To these, thy nightly offerings of affection,  
Drawn from thy ready talent for selection ;  
For still it seemed in thee a natural gift,  
The letter'd grain from letter'd chaff to sift.

By daily use and circumstance endear'd,  
Things are of value now that once appear'd  
Of no account, and without notice past,  
Which o'er dull life a simple cheering cast ;  
To hear thy morning step the stairs descending,  
Thy voice with other sounds domestic blending ;  
After each stated nightly absence met,  
To see thee by the morning table set,  
Pouring from smoky spout the amber stream,  
Which sends from saucer'd cup its fragrant steam ;  
To see thee cheerly on the threshold stand,  
On summer morn, with trowel in thy hand,  
For garden work prepared ; in winter's gloom  
From thy cold noonday walk to see thee come,  
In furry garment lapp'd, with spatter'd feet,  
And by the fire resume thy wonted seat ;  
Ay, even o'er things like these sooth'd age has thrown  
A sober charm they did not always own,  
As winter hoar-frost makes minutest spray  
Of bush or hedge-weed sparkle to the day  
In magnitude and beauty, which bereaved  
Of such investment, eye had ne'er perceived.  
The change of good and evil to abide,  
As partners linked, long have we side by side  
Our earthly journey held ; and who can say  
How near the end of our united way ?  
By nature's course not distant ; sad and reft  
Will she remain, — the lonely pilgrim left.  
If thou be taken first, who can to me  
Like sister, friend, and home-companion be ?  
Or who, of wonted daily kindness shorn,  
Shall feel such loss, and mourn as I shall mourn ?

And if I should be fated first to leave  
This earthly house, though gentle friends may grieve,  
And above them all, so truly proved  
A friend and brother long and justly loved,  
There is no living wight of woman born  
Who then shall mourn for me as thou wilt mourn."

But the young life of kindred descendants, with its gladsome stir, was not absent from the Baillies' house. Joanna's loving, overflowing lines "To an Infant," to "Sophia J. Baillie," to "Two Brothers," to "James B. Baillie," show how closely the thoughts of niece and grand-nephew were entwined round her heart. Of one of them she wrote :—

"Yea, Heaven perhaps thine aged aunt may spare  
Some years in these thy childhood's beams to share :  
Thy fair beginning may her ending cheer,  
But aught beyond will not to her appear.  
And when to man's estate thou dost attain  
No trace of her will in thy mind remain.  
Ay, so it needs must be, and be it so,  
Though ne'er for thee will heart more warmly glow."

In 1844, Joanna, acknowledging Mary Berry's promised gift of a new and complete edition of all her *brochures*, reflected a little sadly, "If I were much given to envy, I should envy you for

two things : first, that a clever, knowing-in-the-trade bookseller calls for permission to reprint your works ; and, next, that you can still read with undivided attention, and take an interest in every subject before you. On what spot of the earth lives that bookseller who would now publish at his own risk any part of my works ? And what book could you give me to read of which I should have any distinct recollection three months hence ?”

With regard to the first question, Joanna lived to see another publication of her whole works in a collected form, made seven years afterwards, and only a few weeks before her death. Mary Berry answered the question more rapidly, in a frank and kind protest. “Why, what a goose you are!—that ever I, M. B., should dare to call Joanna Baillie a goose. But don't you see that ‘a clever, knowing-in-the-trade bookseller’ reprints trifles made for a drawing-room table and the talk of the day, and not works written for posterity, and to take their place in the small band of real poets who have adorned our country ? *There* you will flourish

ever green, and will rise in importance as you recede from the present generation; *there* Shakspeare will acknowledge that you dared walk on the same plank with him, without copying him, or falling from the height of which he had shown you the example; *there* Byron will own that your expression of passion in *Basil* exceeds any of his, although calling to his aid sentiment and scenes drawn from that vicious circle to which you disdained having recurrence, and into whose precincts your muse never wandered."

These letters seem to have been the last which passed between the old friends. In the end of her letter Joanna's spirit brightens into something beyond resignation. After remarking that they two still looked forward to months and half-years, as they formerly did to longer periods, willing to remain as long as their Heavenly Father pleased they should, and no longer, she adds, "For me, the walking through our churchyard is no unpleasant thing; it cannot extinguish the lights beaming from the promised house in which are many mansions."



Mary Berry thus closes her share of the correspondence, "And now, my dear Joanna, God bless you! . . . . Once more, God bless you!"

Joanna Baillie lived, as has been said, some years longer, leading always a more secluded and peaceful life. At last on Sunday, the 23rd of February, 1851, when she had entered her ninetieth year, not more than twenty-four hours from the time when she had expressed a strong desire to be released from life, she passed away "without suffering, in the full possession of her faculties, with sorrowing relations around her, in the act of devotion." Mary Russel Mitford mentions that in a letter from Joanna Baillie to a friend, written a very few days before her death, she expressed her satisfaction in having received the sacrament along with her sister on the previous Sunday. Mary and Agnes Berry died the following year. Lucy Aikin, Joanna's intimate friend for half a century, died three years after Joanna Baillie, and was buried in the grave next to her whom she had loved and honoured, in the old church-yard at Hampstead. There was space on the



other side for Agnes, the fond and faithful sister, who nearly attained the full round of a century.

Of Joanna Baillie's plays it is not necessary to say anything. The best judges have long ago dissected and analysed them, and agreed as to their amount of merit. If she was tempted to generalise, it was because of a breadth of mind which was very extraordinary in a woman. If the well-balanced character of that mind gave her a preference for well-balanced, somewhat monotonous characters, notwithstanding that her aim was a delineation of the passions, it saved her grasp of comprehension from ever becoming spasmodic. Her female characters and her softer scenes had no want of throbbing sensibility and gentle grace. The independence and touch of wrong-headedness which prevented her from being guided and influenced by more experienced, better informed people, were but the effects (unfortunate, if you will) of her native freshness and determination of mind; and possibly she paid a heavy price for them in the dragging construction, which, as a rule, shut out her plays from the stage.

Joanna Baillie's "Fugitive Verses" were, like her plays, unequal; but they vindicated her excellence in affectionate and playful composition. Her "Kitten," and "A Child to his Sick Grandfather," are very happy instances. Many of Joanna Baillie's songs are simply exquisite in their tripping measure, fine taste, concentrated feeling, and beautiful imagery. Her Scotch songs are much more than happy. They show, on a small scale, the mingled breadth and delicacy of handling seen in her plays. Every element of interest is treated as it deserves. Each is in due subordination, while the treatment is eloquent, racy, full of humour, and of kindly affection. So sunny are these songs, and at the same time so ripe in their colouring, that one ceases to wonder at her statement which at first provoked Sir Walter Scott's laughter, that she could not write her lyrics save on a warm day. One peculiarity remains about them. Although she made love the master-passion in Count Basil, and her severest critics did not accuse her of any incapacity to enter into the subtle re-

cesses and lay bare the wild vagaries of the passion, there is hardly what can be called a love-song among all she wrote. Not one answers to Susanna Blamire's "What ails this heart o' mine?" Perhaps the nearest to a love-song is "The Shepherd's Watch by the Trysting Bush," with its passion of longing; yet even that is slightly and tenderly, but very plainly, made fun of. Another peculiarity to be noticed is, that, while it is now generally granted that the weak point in Joanna Baillie's work was her comedies, indeed that she could not write a good comedy, still, sufficient for the production of very droll songs were "the placid cheerfulness and gay good sense," "the ease and purity of language," which Jeffrey in his first attack allowed that she possessed, but which he pronounced quite inadequate qualities for the demands of a comedy.

Among the entirely waggish songs, are "Tam o' the Lin," "Hooly and Fairly," new words to the "Weary Pund o' Tow," "The Merry Bachelor," "'Twas on a Morn when we were Thrang," and "Fy, let us a' to the Wedding"—

an admirable paraphrase of the clever but gross song of Semple of Beltrees.

Among those characterised by a modified waggery, and with a substratum of sentiment, are, "Poverty parts good Company," "'Saw ye Johnnie comin'?' quo' she," "The Lover's Watch," the first new set of "The Weary Pund o' Tow," "Wi' Lang-legged Tam the broose I tried," and "Woo'd and Married and a'."

"Oh! swiftly glides the Bonnie Boat," is the only one of Joanna Baillie's Scotch songs about which humour does not glint and play. This song is often confounded with Lady Nairne's version of "The Boatie Rows."

It is next to impossible to individualise excellencies where they are so abundant. The spirit and graphicness of the following verses speak for themselves:—

"Wi' lang-legg'd Tam the broose I tried,  
Though best o' foot, what wan he O?  
The first kiss o' the blowzy bride,  
But I the heart of Nanny O.

"I'm nearly wild, I'm nearly daft,  
Wad Iain be douce, but canna O;  
There's ne'er a laird o' muir or craft,  
Sae blithe as I wi' Nanny O.

“ Her angry mither scaulds sae loud,  
And darkly glooms her granny O ;  
But think they he can e’er be cow’d  
Who loves and lives for Nanny O ?

“ The spae-wife on my loof that blink’t  
Is but a leein’ ran’y O ;  
For weel kens she my fate is link’t  
In spite o’ a’ to Nanny O.”

The same glee and spirit are seen in “ The Merry Bachelor : ” —

“ The bride forgot her simple groom,  
And every lass her trysted jo ;  
Yet nae man’s brow on Will could gloom,  
They liked his rousing blitheness so.

“ The carline left her housewife’s wark,  
The bairnies shouted Willie’s name,  
The colley too would fidge and bark,  
And wag his tail when Willie came.”

How subtly wise and tender are the remonstrances of the father and the mother in “ Woo’d and Married and a’ ! ”

“ Her mither then hastily spak :  
‘ The lassie is glaikit wi’ pride ;  
In my pouch I had never a plack  
The day that I was a bride.

E'en tak' to your wheel and be clever,  
And draw out your thread in the sun;  
The gear that is gifted, it never  
Will last like the gear that is won.  
Woo'd and married and a' !  
Wi' havins and tocher sae sma' !  
I think ye are very weel aff  
To be woo'd and married and a'."

" 'Toot, toot ! ' quo' her grey-headed faither,  
' She's less o' a bride than a bairn ;  
She's ta'en like a cowl frae the heather,  
Wi' sense and discretion to learn.  
Half husband, I trow, and half daddy,  
As humour inconstantly leans,  
The chiel maun be patient and steady  
That yokes wi' a mate in her teens.  
A kerchief sae douce and sae neat,  
O'er her locks that the wind used to blaw !  
I'm baith like to laugh and to greet  
When I think o' her married at a'."

And what a picture of bashful, roguish love, that  
conquers mortified vanity, is in the conduct of  
the bride !

" She turn'd, and she blush'd, and she smiled,  
And she lookit sae bashfully down ;  
The pride o' her heart was beguiled,  
And she play'd wi' the sleeve o' her gown,  
She twirled the tag o' her lace,  
And she nippit her boddice sae blue,  
Syne blinkit sae sweet in his face,  
And aff like a mawkin she flew.

Woo'd and married and a' !  
Wi' Johnnie to roose her and a' !  
She thinks hersel' very weel aff  
To be woo'd and married and a'."

A nice distinction, as well as "a full and particular account of the whole matter," is contained in the repeated and emphatic statements of another song:—

"For a chap at the door in braid daylight  
Is no like a chap that is heard at e'en."

"An elderlin man i' the noon o' the day  
Should be wiser than youngsters that come at e'en."

The wife has reached the last extremity in  
"Hooly and Fairly":—

"I' the kirk sic commotion last Sabbath she made,  
Wi' babs o' red roses and breast-knots o'erlaid ;  
The dominie stickit the psalm very nearly.  
O gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly !  
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;  
O gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly !

And so has the husband with his cry of despair—

"I wish I were single, I wish I were freed,  
I wish I were doited, I wish I were dead ;



Or she in the mools to dement me nae mairly.

What does't avail to cry hooly and fairly ?

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;

Wasting my breath to cry hooly and fairly ! ”

There is a sweet archness in number one of Joanna Baillie's "Weary Pund o' Tow," and it presents a succession of charming rural scenes. The fire of the lass imaged in number two reminds the reader of the "Miss Jack," who, to the admiration of the old Clydeside farmer, sat her pony as if she were a part of the beast.

The conceit, the imperturbability, the irony of "Tam o' the Lin" are inimitable.

In "Saw ye Johnnie comin' ? quo' she," the spell woven round the speaker, and the double inducements which she offers, combine to give the song a quaint uniqueness :—

“ Saw ye Johnnie comin' ? ’ quo' she,

‘ Saw ye Johnnie comin' ?

Wi' his blue bonnet on his head,

And his doggie runnin' ?

Yestreen, about the gloamin' time,

I chanced to see him comin',

Whistling merrily the tune

*That I am a' day hummin',* quo' she,

*‘ I am a' day hummin.’*

" 'Fee him, faither, fee him,' quo' she ;  
     ' Fee him, faither, fee him ;  
*A' the wark about the house*  
     *Gaes wi' me when I see him.*  
*A' the wark about the house*  
     *I gang sae lightly through it ;*  
*And though ye pay some merks o' gear,*  
     *Hoot ! ye winna rue it,' quo' she,*  
     *' Na ! ye winna rue it.'*

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

" 'Weel do I lo'e him,' quo' she,  
     ' Weel do I lo'e him ;  
 The brawest lads about the place  
     Are a' but haverels to him.  
 O fee him, faither ; lang, I trow,  
     We've dull and dowie been ;  
*He'll haud the plough, thrash i' the barn,*  
     *And crack wi' me at e'en,' quo' she,*  
     *' Crack wi' me at e'en.'* "

The Scotch song which has least of Joanna's humour, and least nationality, has a melodiousness which harmonises with its subject, and which has insured it popularity.

" O swiftly glides the bonnie boat,  
     Just parted from the shore,  
 And to the fisher's chorus note  
     Soft moves the dipping oar.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

We cast our lines in Largo Bay,  
Our nets are floating wide ;  
Our bonnie boat, with lurching sway,  
Rocks lightly on the tide.

• • • • •

“ The mermaid on her rock may sing,  
The witch may weave her charm,  
Nor water-sprite nor elritch thing  
The bonnie boat can harm.  
It safely bears its scaly store  
Through many a stormy gale,  
While joyful shouts rise from the shore,  
Its homeward prow to hail.”

---

### WI' LANG-LEGG'D TAM.

Wi' lang-legg'd Tam the broose I tried,  
Though best o' foot, what wan he O ?  
The first kiss o' the blowzy bride,  
But I the heart of Nanny O.

Like swallow wheeling round her tower,  
Like rock-bird round her cranny O,  
Sinsyne I hover near her bower,  
And list and look for Nanny O.

I'm nearly wild, I'm nearly daft,  
Wad fain be douce, but canna O ;  
There's ne'er a laird o' muir or craft  
Sae blithe as I wi' Nanny O.

She's sweet, she's young, she's fair, she's good,  
The brightest maid of many O.  
Though a' the world our love withstood,  
I'd woo and win my Nanny O.

Her angry mither scaulds sae loud,  
And darkly glooms her granny O;  
But think they he can e'er be cow'd  
Who loves and lives for Nanny O?

The spae-wife on my loof that blink't  
Is but a leein' ran'y O,  
For weel kens she my fate is link't  
In spite o' a' to Nanny O.

---

### THE MERRY BACHELOR.

Willie was a wanton wag,  
The blithest lad that e'er I saw,  
Of field and floor he was the brag,  
And carried a' the gree awa'.

And wasna Willie stark and keen  
When he gaed to the wappen-schaw?  
He won the prizes on the green,  
And cheer'd the feasters in the ha'.

His head was wise, his heart was leal,  
His truth was fair without a flaw,  
And aye by every honest chiel  
His word was holden as a law.

And wasna Willie still our pride,  
When in his gallant gear arrayed,  
He wan the broose and kissed the bride,  
While pipes the wedding-welcome played ?

And aye he led the foremost dance  
Wi' winsome maidens buskit braw,  
And gave to each a merry glance,  
That stole awhile her heart awa'.

The bride forgot her simple groom,  
And every lass her trysted jo ;  
Yet nae man's brow on Will could gloom,  
They liked his rousing blitheness so.

Our good Mess John laughed wi' the lave ;  
The dominie, for a' his lere,  
Could scarcely like himself behave,  
While a' was glee and revel there.

A joyous sight was Willie's face,  
Baith far and near in ilka spot ;  
In ha' received wi' kindly grace,  
And welcomed to the lowly cot.

The carline left her housewife's wark,  
The bairnies shouted Willie's name ;  
The colley too would fidge and bark,  
And wag his tail when Willie came.

But Willie now has crossed the main,  
And he has been sae lang awa' !  
Oh ! would he were returned again,  
To drive the dowfness frae us a'.

---

#### WOO'D AND MARRIED AND A'.

The bride she is winsome and bonny,  
Her hair it is snooded sae sleek,  
And faithfu' and kind is her Johnny,  
Yet fast fa' the tears on her cheek.  
New pearlins are cause of her sorrow,  
New pearlins and plenishing too ;  
The bride that has a' to borrow  
Has e'en right mickle ado.

Woo'd and married and a' !

Woo'd and married and a' !

Isna she very weel aff

To be woo'd and married and a' ?

Her mither then hastily spak :

"The lassie is glaikit wi' pride ;

In my pouch I had never a plack

The day that I was a bride.

E'en tak' to your wheel and be clever,  
And draw out your thread in the sun ;  
The gear that is gifted, it never  
Will last like the gear that is won.  
Woo'd and married and a' !  
Wi' havins and tocher sae sma' !  
I think ye are very weel aff  
To be woo'd and married and a' !"

"Toot ! toot !" quo' her grey-headed faither,  
"She's less o' a bride than a bairn ;  
She's ta'en like a cowl frae the heather,  
Wi' sense and discretion to learn.  
Half husband, I trow, and half daddy,  
As humour inconstantly leans,  
The chiel maun be patient and steady  
That yokes wi' a mate in her teens.  
A kerchief sae douce and sae neat,  
O'er her locks that the wind used to blaw !  
I'm baith like to laugh and to greet  
When I think o' her married at a' !"

Then out spak the wily bridegroom ;  
Weel waled were his wordies I ween :  
"I'm rich, though my coffer be toom,  
Wi' the blink o' your bonny blue e'en.  
I'm prouder o' thee by my side,  
Though thy ruffles and ribbons be few,



Than if Kate o' the Craft were my bride,  
Wi' purples and pearlins enou'.  
Dear and dearest of ony !  
Ye're woo'd and buiket and a' !  
And do ye think scorn o' your Johnny,  
And grieve to be married at a' ?"

She turn'd, and she blush'd, and she smiled,  
And she lookit sae bashfully down ;  
The pride o' her heart was beguiled,  
And she play'd wi' the sleeve o' her gown,  
She twirled the tag o' her lace,  
And she nippit her boddice sae blue,  
Syne blinkit sae sweet in his face,  
And aff like a mawkin she flew.  
Woo'd and married and a' !  
Wi' Johnny to roose her and a' !  
She thinks hersel' very weel aff  
To be woo'd and married and a' !

---

IT FELL ON A MORN WHEN WE WERE  
THRANG.

It fell on a morn when we were thrang ;  
The kirn it crooned, the cheese was making,  
And bannocks on the gridle baking,  
When ane at the door chapt loud and lang.

Yet the auld gudewife, and her Mays sae tight,  
Of a' this bauld din took sma' notice, I ween,  
For a chap at the door in braid daylight  
Is no like a chap that is heard at e'en.

But the clocksy auld laird of the Warlock glen,  
Wha waited without, half blate, half cheery,  
And langed for a sight o' his winsome deary,  
Raised up the latch, and came crouselly ben.  
His coat was new, and his o'erlay was white ;  
His mittens and hose were cozie and bien ;  
But a wooer that comes in braid daylight  
Is no like a wooer that comes at e'en.

He greeted the carline and lasses sae braw,  
And his bare lyart pow sae smoothly he straikit,  
And lookit about like a body half glaikit  
On bonny sweet Nanny, the youngest of a'.  
"Ah, laird !" quo' the carline, "and look ye that way ?  
Fye, letna sic fancies bewilder you clean ;  
An elderlin man i' the noon o' the day  
Should be wiser than youngsters that come at e'en."

"Na, na," quo' the pawky auld wife ; "I trow  
You'll no fash your head wi' a youthfu' gilly,  
As wild and as skeich as a muirland filly ;  
Black Madge is far better and fitter for you."

He hemm'd and he haw'd, and he drew in his mouth,  
And he squeezed the blue bonnet his twa hands  
between,  
For a wooer that comes when the sun's i' the south  
Is mair landward than wooers that come at e'en.

“Black Madge is sae careful——” “What's that to me?”  
“She's sober and eident, has sense in her noddle ;  
She's douce and respeckit.” “I carena a bodle ;  
Love winna be guided, and my fancy's free.”  
Madge toss'd back her head wi' a saucy slight,  
And Nanny, loud laughing, ran out to the green ;  
For a wooer that comes when the sun shines bright  
Is no like a wooer that comes at e'en.

Then awa' flung the laird, and loud muttered he :  
“A' the daughters of Eve, between Orkney and  
Tweed O !  
Black or fair, young or auld, dame or damsel or widow,  
May gang wi' their pride to the deil for me !”  
But the auld gudewife, and her Mays sae tight,  
Cared little for a' his stour banning, I ween ;  
For a wooer that comes in braid daylight  
Is no like a wooer that comes at e'en.

---

## FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

Fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
For they will be lirting there ;  
For Jock's to be married to Maggy,  
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

And there will be gibing and jeering,  
And glancing of bonny dark e'en ;  
Loud laughing and smooth-gabbit speering  
O' questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy the beauty,  
Wha raises her cockup sae hie,  
And giggles at preachings and duty ;  
Gude grant that she gang not agee !

And there will be auld Geordie Tanner,  
Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd ;  
She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,  
But now he looks dowie and cow'd !

And brown Tibby Fowler, the heiress,  
Will poke at the tap o' the ha',  
Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is  
To catch up her gloves when they fa',

Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleckit,  
And haver and glower in her face,

When tocherless Mays are negleckit—  
A' crying, a scandalous case.

And Mysie, wha's claverin aunty  
Wad match her wi' Laurie the Laird,  
And learn the young fule to be vaunty,  
But neither to spin nor to card.

And Andrew, wha's granny is yearning  
To see him a clerical blade,  
Was sent to the college for learning,  
And came back a coof as he gaed.

And there will be auld Widow Martin,  
That ca's hersel thritty and twa!  
And thrawn-gabbit Madge, wha for certain  
Has jilted Hal o' the Shaw.

And Elspy, the swoster sae genty,  
A pattern of havins and sense,  
Will straik on her mittens sae dainty,  
And crack wi' Mass John in the spence.

And Angus, the seer o' ferlies,  
That sits on the stane at his door,  
And tells about bogles, and mair lees  
Than tongue ever uttered before.

And there will be Bauldy the boaster,  
Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue;

Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,  
Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young.

And Hugh, the town-writer, I'm thinking,  
That trades in his lawerly skill,  
Will egg on the fighting and drinking,  
To bring after-grist to his mill.

And Maggy—na, na, we'll be civil,  
And let the wee bridie a-be ;  
A vilipend tongue is the devil,  
And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
For they will be lilting there,  
Frae mony a far-distant haudin',  
The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's-head and haggis,  
And browst o' the barley-mow ;  
E'en he that comes latest and lag is,  
May feast upon dainties enow.

Veal florentins in the o'en bakin'.  
Weel plenished wi' raisins and fat ;  
Beef, mutton, and chuckies all taken  
Het reekin' frae spit and frae pat.

And glasses (I trow 'tis na' said ill),  
To drink the young couple good luck,

Weel filled wi' a braw bucken ladle,  
Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,  
And reeling and crossing o' han's,  
Till even auld Lucky is laughing,  
As back by the aumry she stan's.

Sic bobbing, and flinging, and whirling,  
While fiddlers are making their din ;  
And pipers are droning and skirling  
As loud as the roar o' the lin.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
For they will be lilting there ;  
For Jock's to be married to Maggy,  
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

---

### HOOLY AND FAIRLY.

Oh, neighbours ! what had I ado for to marry ?  
My wife she drinks possets and wine o' Canary,  
And ca's me a niggardly, thrawn-gabbit cairly.  
O gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly !  
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;  
O gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly !



She feasts wi' her kimmers on dainties enew,  
Aye bowsing and smirking and wiping her mou',  
While I sit aside and am helpit but sparely.

O gin my wife wad feast hooly and fairly !

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;

O gin my wife wad feast hooly and fairly !

To fairs and to bridals, and preachings and a',  
She gangs sae light-hearted and buskit sae braw,  
In ribbons and mantuas that gar me gae barely !

O gin my wife wad spend hooly and fairly !

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;

O gin my wife wad spend hooly and fairly !

I' the kirk sic commotion last Sabbath she made,  
Wi' babs o' red roses and breast-knots o'erlaid !

The dominie stickit the psalm very nearly.

O gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly !

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;

O gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly !

She's warring and flyting frae morning till e'en ;  
And if ye gainsay her, her e'en glour sae keen ;  
Then tongue, nieve, and cudgel she'll lay on ye sairly !

O gin my wife wad strike hooly and fairly !

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;

O gin my wife wad strike hooly and fairly !

When tired wi' her cantrips she lies in her bed,  
The wark a' negleckit, the chaumer unred,  
While a' our gude neighbours are stirring sae early.  
O gin my wife wad sleep timely and fairly !

Timely and fairly, timely and fairly ;  
O gin my wife wad sleep timely and fairly !

A word o' gude counsel or grace she'll hear none,  
She bardies the elders and mocks at Mess John,  
While back in his teeth his ain text she flings rarely.  
O gin my wife wad speak hooly and fairly !

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;  
O gin my wife wad speak hooly and fairly !

I wish I were single, I wish I were freed,  
I wish I were doited, I wish I were dead,  
Or she in the mools to dement me nae mairly !  
What does't avail to cry hooly and fairly ?

Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly ;  
Wasting my breath to cry hooly and fairly !

---

#### THE WEARY PUND O' TOW.

A young gudewife is in my house,  
And thrifty means to be ;  
But aye she's runnin' to the town  
Some ferlie there to see.

The weary pund, the weary pund,  
The weary pund o' tow,  
I soothly think ere it be spun  
I'll wear a lyart pōw.

And when she sets her to the wheel,  
To draw the threads wi' care,  
In comes the chapman wi' his gear,  
And she can spin nae mair.  
The weary pund, &c.

And she, like mony merry May,  
At fairs maun still be seen ;  
At kirkyard preachings near the tent,  
At dances on the green.  
The weary pund, &c.

Her dainty ear a fiddle charms,  
A bagpipe's her delight ;  
But for the croonings o' her wheel  
She disna care a mite.  
The weary pund, &c.

You spak, my Kate, of snow-white webs,  
Made o' your linkum-twine,  
But ah ! I fear our bonny burn  
Will ne'er lave web o' thine.  
The weary pund, &c.

Nay, smile again, my winsome Kate !  
Sic jibings mean nae ill ;  
Should I gae sarkless to my grave,  
I'll lo'e and bless thee still.  
The weary pund, &c.

---

### TAM O' THE LIN.

Tam o' the Lin was fu' o' pride,  
And his weapon he girt to his valorous side,  
A scabbard o' leather wi' de'il-hair't within.  
"Attack me wha daur !" quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin he bought a mear ;  
She cost him five shillings, she wasna dear.  
Her back stuck up, and her sides fell in.  
"A fiery yaud," quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin he courted a May ;  
She stared at him sourly, and said him nay ;  
But he stroked down his jerkin and cocked up his chin.  
"She aims at a laird, then," quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin he gaed to the fair,  
Yet he looked wi' disdain on the chapman's ware ;  
Then chucked out a sixpence, the sixpence was tin.  
"There's coin for the fiddlers," quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin wad show his lear,  
And he scanned o'er the book wi' wise-like stare.  
He muttered confusedly, but didna begin.  
“ This is Dominic's business,” quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin had a cow wi' ae horn,  
That likit to feed on his neighbour's corn.  
The stanes he threw at her fell short o' the skin ;  
“ She's a lucky auld reiver,” quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin he married a wife,  
And she was the torment, the plague o' his life ;  
She lays sae about her, and maks sic a din,  
“ She frightens the baby,” quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin grew dowie and douce,  
And he sat on a stane at the end o' his house.  
“ What ails, auld chield ?” He looked haggard and thin.  
“ I'm no very cheery,” quo' Tam o' the Lin.

Tam o' the Lin lay down to die,  
And his friends whispered softly and woefully—  
“ We'll buy you some masses to scour away sin.”  
“ And drink at my lyke-wake,” quo' Tam o' the Lin.

## THE WEE PICKLE TOW.

A lively young lass had a wee pickle tow,  
And she thought to try the spinning o't ;  
She sat by the fire, and the rock took a low,  
And that was an ill beginning o't.  
Loud and shrill was the cry that she uttered, I ween :  
The sudden mischanter brought tears to her e'en ;  
Her face it was fair, but her temper was keen.  
O dule for the ill beginning o't !

She stamp'd on the floor, and her twa hands she wrung ;  
Her bonny sweet mou' she crookit O !  
And fell was the outbreak o' words frae her tongue,  
Like ane sair demented she lookit O !  
" Foul fa' the inventor o' rock and o' reel !  
I hope, Gude forgie me, he's now wi' the deil ;  
He brought us mair trouble than help wot I weel.  
O dule for the ill beginning o't !

" And noo they are spinning and hemping awa',  
They'll talk o' my rock and the burning o't ;  
While Tibbie, and Mysie, and Maggie and a',  
Into some silly joke will be turning it.  
They'll say I was doited, they'll say I was fou ;  
They'll say I was dowie and Robin untrue ;  
They'll say in the fire some love pouter I threw,  
And that made the ill beginning o't !

“ Oh, curst be the day, and unchancy the hour,  
When I sat me a-down to the spinning o't !  
Then some evil spirit or warlock had power,  
And made sic an ill beginning o't.  
May spunkie my feet to the boggie betray,  
The lunzie folk steal my new kirtle away,  
And Robin forsake me for douce Effie Gray,  
The next time I try the spinning o't.”

---

### THE LOVER'S WATCH.

The gowan glitters on the sward,  
The laverock's in the sky,  
And Colley on my plaid keeps ward,  
While time is passing by.  
Oh no ! sad and slow !  
I hear nae welcome sound ;  
The shadow of our trysting bush,  
It wears so slowly round !

My sheep-bell tinkles frae the west,  
My lambs are bleating near ;  
But still the sound that I lo'e best,  
Alack ! I canna hear.

Oh no ! sad and slow,  
The shadow lingers still,  
And like a lanely ghaist I stand,  
And croon upon the hill.



I hear below the water roar,  
The mill wi' clacking din,  
And Lucky scolding frae her door,  
To ca' the bairnies in.

Oh no ! sad and slow !  
These are nae sounds for me ;  
The shadow of our trysting bush,  
It creeps sae drearily !

I coft yestreen, frae chapman Tam,  
A snood of bonny blue,  
And promised, when our trysting cam',  
To tie it round her brow.

Oh no ! sad and slow !  
The mark it winna pass ;  
The shadow of that weary thorn  
Is tethered on the grass.

O now I see her on the way ;  
She's past the witches' knowe ;  
She's climbing up the browny's brae,  
My heart is in a lowe !

Oh no ! 'tis not so !  
'Tis glaumerie I have seen ;  
The shadow of that hawthorn bush  
Will move nae mair till e'en.

My book o' grace I'll try to read,  
Though conn'd wi' little skill :

When Colley barks I'll raise my head,  
And find her on the hill.  
Oh no ! sad and slow,  
The time will ne'er be gane ;  
The shadow of the trysting bush  
Is fixed like ony stane.

---

## POVERTY PARTS GOOD COMPANY.

When my o'erlay was white as the foam o' the lin,  
And siller was chinkin' my pouches within,  
When my lambkins were bleatin' on meadow and brae,  
As I went to my love in new cleathing sae gay,  
Kind was she, and my friends were free,  
But poverty parts gude company.

How swift pass'd the minutes and hours of delight !  
The piper played cheerie, the crusie burn'd bright,  
And linked in my hand was the maiden sae dear,  
As she footed the floor in her holiday gear !  
Woe's me ! and can it then be  
That poverty parts sic company ?

We met at the fair, and we met at the kirk ;  
We met in the sunshine, we met in the mirk ;  
And the sound o' her voice and the blinks o' her e'en,  
The cheerin' and life of my bosom hae been.

Leaves frae the tree at Martinmas flee,  
And poverty parts sweet company.

At bridal and infare I've braced me wi' pride,  
The broose I hae won and a kiss o' the bride ;  
And loud was the laughter good fellows among,  
As I uttered my banter or chorus'd my song.  
Dowie to dree are jestin' and glee,  
When poverty spoils gude company.

Wherever I gaed, kindly lasses looked sweet,  
And mithers and aunties were unco discreet ;  
While kebbuck and bicker were set on the board ;  
But now they pass by me, and never a word.  
Sae let it be, for the worldly and slee  
Wi' poverty keep nae company.

But the hope o' my love is a cure for its smart,  
And the spae-wife has tauld me to keep up my heart ;  
For wi' my last saxpence her loof I hae crost,  
And the bliss that is fated can never be lost,  
Tho' cruelly we may ilka day see  
How poverty parts dear company.

---

---

"SAW YE JOHNNY COMIN'?"

"Saw ye Johnny comin'?" quo' she.

"Saw ye Johnny comin'?"

Wi' his blue bonnet on his head,

And his doggie runnin'?

Yestreen, about the gloamin' time,

I chanced to see him comin',

Whistling merrily the tune

That I am a' day hummin'," quo' she,

"I am a' day hummin'."

"Fee him, faither, fee him," quo' she;

"Fee him, faither, fee him;

A' the wark about the house

Gaes wi' me when I see him.

A' the wark about the house

I gang sae lightly through it;

And though ye pay some merks o' gear—

Hoot! ye winna rue it," quo' she—

"Na, ye winna rue it."

"What wad I dae wi' him, Meggy?—

What wad I dae him?

He's ne'er a sark upon his back,

And I hae nane to gie him."

“ I hae twa sarks into my kist,  
And ane o’ them I’ll gie him,  
And for a merk o’ mair fee  
O, dinna stand wi’ him,” quo’ she—  
“ Dinna stand wi’ him.

“ Weel do I lo’e him,” quo’ she ;  
“ Weel do I lo’e him.  
The brawest lads about the place  
Are a’ but haverels to him.  
O fee him, faither ; lang, I trow,  
We’ve dull and dowie been ;  
He’ll haud the plough, thrash i’ the barn,  
And crack wi’ me at e’en,” quo’ she—  
“ Crack wi’ me at e’en.”

THE END.

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